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Albania: Ex-Sigurimi Group Reportedly Attacked Reporter

AU1303155396 Tirana ATA in English
1221 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tirana, March 13 (ATA)—A group of former State Security (Sigurimi) hit yesterday a reporter of LIRIA (paper of the Anticommunist Association of the Formerly Politically Persecuted), Artan Lleshi, writes ALBANIA today.

Lleshi was present in the central newspaper selling unit in Tirana and saw a group of persons who snatched copies of the independent paper TRIBUNA DEMOKRATIKE, last Sunday [10 March]. In its Sunday issue, this paper accused Socialist Party Deputy Chairman Servet Pellumbi as collaborator of the former State Sigurimi.

On the same night, some persons tried to write anti-constitutional, communist slogans in the outer walls of the premises of TRIBUNA DEMOKRATIKE newspaper.

For these actions, ALBANIA accuses former State Sigurimi.

"These acts are openly showing the strategy of former communists to seize the power," comments ALBANIA.

These acts come right after threats by Democratic Alliance Party leader Neritan Ceka to "send to jail" and "to throw into sea" reporters of TV and the independent press, writes the newspaper.

Albania: Meksi Views Impact of Possible Socialist Win

AU1203152896 Tirana ATA in English
1244 GMT 11 Mar 96

[Report on interview with Albanian Prime Minister Aleksander Meksi by RILINDJA DEMOKRATIKE in Tirana on 10 March: "Return of Ex-Communists to Power, Catastrophe for Albania"—ATA headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tirana, March 11 (ATA)—Albanian Premier Aleksander Meksi had an interview with the newspaper RILINDJA DEMOKRATIKE on Sunday [10 March] about future political developments in Albania.

"I believe the Albanians can clearly realise that the return of communists to power would be a catastrophe not only for the Republic of Albania, but also a national catastrophe and destabilisation for the Balkan Peninsula."

Asked what is "the difference" in the way of governing pledged by the socialists if they come to power, Meksi said: "'Different' for them is the return to the past, mixed property and nationalisations, the curbing of reform, indirect taxes and other things."

Meksi referred to the mixed market economy demanded by socialist leaders and explained that this is simply done to legalise the state property and nationalisations, and for this they appear as if they are tolerant of the private property.

As regards the fact that the socialist chiefs have severely criticised his government, Meksi explained that they have always been against anything and this is testified by the fact that they have generally voted against all the laws presented by the government.

Asked what the four years of governing meant to him, Meksi said that these years have been significant for Albania's transformation from a country of terror to one of democracy and market economy.

The democratic government's program has been ambitious and difficult, but the democratic government has realised everything envisaged by the programme, said Meksi adding that the support from the Albanians themselves and that from European democratic forces, the U.S. and other countries have been decisive for the reform's results.

Among the international institutions that have supported Albania, Meksi mentioned the European Bank, the World Bank, IMF and many other banks, stressing that they have been close to the Albanian Government, precisely because they have realised the dimensions of the new Albanian democracy.

It is the Albanians who should be careful not to allow the repetition of the past, Meksi concluded in his interview.

Albania: Democratic Union Presents Electoral Platform

AU1203151696 Tirana ATA in English
1747 GMT 11 Mar 96

[Article by R. Floqi]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tirana, March 11 (ATA)—Albanian Democratic Union Party [PUDSh] held in Tirana today its national conference in which it presented its political and electoral platform.

"We have thought of presenting our candidates in 50 zones and in all other zones we support the Right Wing League," said PUDSh Secretary General Hajri Mandi.

This party was formed in Florence in 1974 from the union of two diaspora parties: the Peasant Party and the Party of Democratic Union. Its first congress was held in Florence, the second in New York, while the third in Tirana, in 1994. This party has its branches in Austria, USA, Italy, Germany and other countries in which Albanians live.

"The objective of this party in diaspora was to keep alive the patriotism and to fight communism," said Mr. Mandi.

According to him, the PUDSh has today about 20,000 members, it supports the parties of the right wing with nationalistic basis and the 14 point declaration of the Albanian Right Wing League, in which it is a member.

The political platform of this party which was presented today declared as sacred the unification of the nation to ethnic borders, according to international acts, it declares the right of self-determination for Kosova, supports political pluralism and human rights and freedoms.

According to the electoral platform of the PUDSh: "National conciliation and elimination of hostilities is envisaged to be realised through the application of the Anti-Genocide Law through a correct judging of the crimes committed under communist regime."

"The political fight against the threat of communism, not to go backwards, is not a right of the parliamentary political parties only, but also of the non-parliamentary parties," said in the conference Nadir Erkoci, chairman of PUDSh branch for Shkoder.

The conference stressed that the anticommunist front must be united front.

Albania: PDD's Kalakulla Urges Cooperation With Rightists

AU1403105496 Tirana KOHA JONE in Albanian 13 Mar 96 p 3

[Article by Emin Barci: "The Right Fails To Unite"]

[FBIS Translated Text] "The time has come for the Albanian people to turn their eyes toward the genuine right." This will be the motto of a rally to be organized by the Democratic Party of the Right [PDD] next Sunday [17 March]. "All parties that are genuinely right wing and are concerned about the country's future must coordinate their activities," PDD leader Petrit Kalakulla says. The PDD has invited to this rally all the parties in the Rightist League, but there is little chance of success for his operation. The Rightist League's leader Sabri Godo said about this invitation yesterday that "The right is united. It is only Kalakulla who continues to sit outside the League. Rallies do not achieve unity. The right can only be united within the Rightist League."

Both sides are aiming at unification, but neither will accept the initiative of the other. During the runup to the elections, the PDD offers a different right-wing alternative. "We are against the Socialist Party [PS] and against the Democratic Party [PD]. Both these parties have programs and activities that do not correspond to Albania's interests. We are against speculation, either with the PS or the PD. Let the electorate not be deceived by the demagogic slogans of the leadership that betrayed it on 22 March [election date in 1992]. Only a genuine right wing can carry out the reforms that are necessary for Albania," Kalakulla says in support of his proposal.

Although Godo says the same thing politically as Kalakulla, he responds to the formula for unification by saying: "We have declared our stand that we are political opponents of the PS and are in clear opposition to the PD. There is no need for a rally to say this again."

Both the Rightist League and the PDD seem to share an identical aim. The right-wing leaders think that "the country needs the rule of law in order to respect democracy, enforce the laws, combat corruption, and redress the rights of those strata that were illegally stripped of their property by communism and were persecuted and interned for almost half a century." According to them, the interests of the persecuted strata of the population were used as electoral fodder to hand over the seats of power to the PD's neocommunists.

Yet it seems that the Republicans and the other members of the Rightist League will not join Kalakulla on Sunday. "It does not strike me as a sensible move," Godo says. However, Kalakulla puts the other members of the right in a tight spot when he says: "Any right-wing party that does not join up for this kind of cooperation must bear responsibility to the Albanian electorate for what might happen after the elections, whether the PS or the PD wins." The PDD is trying to take the initiative in unifying the right, while for Godo "the League cannot cooperate with the PDD as a partner because it is a single party. We have blazed this trail several times." According to the current leader of the league, five parties and associations cannot count for the same as the single party of the PDD. The only way to unify the right seems to lie in the PDD becoming a member of the league.

Bulgaria: IMF Demands Faster Structural Reform

AU1403121396 Sofia Khorizont Radio Network in Bulgarian 1000 GMT 14 Mar 96

[Report by correspondent Lyubomir Stoimenov]

[FBIS Translated Text] The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank will collaborate with Bulgaria as soon as it receives an effective government program that includes the necessary measures for accelerating the structural reform, IMF and World Bank experts Ms. Anne McGuirk, Oleg Gavrilishin, and Alberto (?Musalem) announced at a briefing at the Council of Ministers this morning. According to the experts, urgent measures are needed to restructure companies and rehabilitate the banking system, in which there are huge losses. The problems that have accumulated throughout the years of reform are now sharply affecting the economy. Bulgaria has potential and is capable of dealing with its problems, the international experts declared, and one of the ways is to reduce the losses, which have reached a value almost equal to 20 percent of the GDP, which would provide almost $2 billion per year in additional resources.

Bulgaria: 'Severe Criticism' Reported at Plenum

AU1403101496 Sofia DUMA in Bulgarian 11 Mar 96 pp 1-2

[Report by "DUMA team" of Dora Chichkova, Tanya Geneva, and Vasil Popov: "1996 Is Crucial Year for the Left's Rule"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The year of 1996 is emerging as a decisive one for the Left's coalition government. This emerged from the speeches at the joint session held on 10 March at BSP [Bulgarian Socialist Party] headquarters on Pozitano Street in Sofia. In a comprehensive analysis, Zhan Videnov rejected the accusations of links between the Council of Ministers and groups and called for a critical attitude, which he said strengthens rather than weakens the government. The debts accumulated over many years, the inherited crisis in the banking system, and the ideologically motivated destruction of agriculture cannot be overcome in one year, the prime minister stressed.

The government received severe criticism at yesterday's joint meeting of the BSP Supreme Council and the leaderships of the Aleksandur Stamboliyski Bulgarian National Agrarian Union and the Ecoglasnost Political Club on the government's year in office. At the same time, it received assurances of further support and recommendations urging greater determination and effectiveness. Aleksandur Lilov, Chavdar Kyuranov, Andrey Lukanov, Yanaki Stoilov, Aleksandur Marinov, and Nikolay Kamov urged Zhan Videnov to propose structural and personnel changes in his cabinet.

Lukanov called for a special plenum to be held on cadre policy and caused a shock by his accusation that political and state structures were merging with security bodies. He said that officials in the executive and the Interior Ministry system were using the special services as an instrument for inner political struggles and demanded that Videnov and Nachev "Bring to account every such transmitter of late Stalinism." "Let's have facts, Andrey!" Minister Nachev retorted spontaneously from the hall.

Chavdar Dobrev demanded changes in the prime minister's team of advisers and the removal of arrogant personalities from the Council of Ministers Press Service. Most of the speeches stressed the worrying climate within the BSP, the stifling of criticism, the difficulties in conducting a dialogue between National Assembly deputies and ministers, the feeble information policy, and the failure to combat crime.

The other two parties in the coalition offered their own analyses of the year in office in speeches by their presidents Stefan Gaytandzhiev and Svetoslav Shivarov.

Vladimir Topencharov pointed out that, although the Socialists' consciousness is positive on the whole, some negative tendencies also dominate. In his view, the Socialists feel great pain in their living experience in the contradiction between the expectation of a wonder and the socioeconomic realities. For this reason, the three parties must use their resources to assist the Council of Ministers.

Mincho Minchev, the leader of the Marxist Platform, declared his conviction that considerable internal tension exists in the BSP. Inadequate explanations have been given on what we found when we assumed office and what we are doing now, he said. The stifling of criticism creates an atmosphere of selfishness and servility. Minchev also voiced his indignation at the "party elite cheerfully ignoring the mass membership." The BSP Supreme Council is in practice isolated from the government; it approves decisions adopted elsewhere by unknown persons, Minchev also said.

The media, state officials, the intellectual sphere, and the tension between the generations were the subjects discussed by Education Minister Ilcho Dimitrov in his statement. He warned that underestimating the problems in the intellectual sphere may have more fatal consequences than the retardation of the economy.

Aleksandur Lilov assessed 1996 as a crucial year for the Left. In his view, two possibilities were equally likely: either a government crisis, or a breakthrough in the cabinet's work. The plenum can provide guarantees for the second outcome, he said, if it makes a sober assessment of the first year. Necessary personnel changes in the Council of Ministers and transparency in the government's work are the other guarantees that society expects, he said. Lilov formulated six political goals for the Left in 1996: a marked strengthening of the administration in all fields; the implementation of programs to combat crime and to stabilize agriculture and the banking system; a radical change in information policy; specific initiatives for improving the dialogue with society; rigorous measures against proven cases of corruption in the state apparatus and among the political elite; and personnel changes in the Council of Ministers. It is not a question of a change in policy or a new government, the strategist emphasized. In his view, the past year was not a failure, but it did not provide a strong and effective administration either. He regarded the changes in the macroeconomic indices as positive. On the negative side stood the results of the anticrime campaign, the stalling of agrarian policy, and the continuing impoverishment. Inasmuch as certain media are in a state of crisis themselves, they cannot be held responsible for our information crisis, Lilov also pointed out.

Chavdar Kyuranov, leader of the Alliance for Social Democracy, wanted a restoration of dialogue and an atmosphere of openness inside the BSP. In his opinion, it was necessary to draft rules for the relations between the state, labor, and capital, as well as a minimum program for the BSP. Statehood must not be strengthened at the expense of the civic society and must not lead to a concentration and personification of power. When advisers become the center of public scandal and put the BSP in a bad light, they should go, and ministers who commit blunders should resign, he said. It would be better for the government if it admitted its weaknesses and accepted responsibility for the grain crisis, Prof. Chavdar Kyuranov also said.

I am worried by the excessive complacency shown by certain ministers, National Assembly Deputy Georgi Zakhariev said, also attacking the executive's reluctance to maintain contacts with the deputies.

Andrey Lukanov expressed satisfaction with what had been achieved, noting that this was only the beginning of the end of the crisis "that began a decade previously and was turned into a social disaster by the Right." Further on in his speech, however, he turned to the weaknesses in the economy. In Lukanov's view, Kamen Toshkov and Stoyan Shukerov are a great deal to blame for the state of the banking sector. Actions are being mounted to ruin banks and corruption has wormed its way in everywhere, Lukanov said. He considered that the BSP will not convince anyone of anything "unless it deals first of all with the scoundrels within its own ranks." Lukanov asked how it came about that amateurs were appointed to leading jobs in posts and communications, how Gelemenov was made head of Bulgartabak, and how such helpless deputy ministers were selected.

Yanaki Stoilov also recommended drafting a comprehensive program for cadre work. In his view, structural and personnel changes are needed in the Council of Ministers and the other branches of the executive. According to Stoilov, the security branches, the financial sphere, and privatization are weak from the personnel aspect. He also demanded an expansion of political dialogue and the party's motivated commitment to preparing for the presidential elections.

Prof. Chavdar Dobrev looked for links between present-day crime and the "murky" accretion of capital at the end of the eighties. In his words, Zhan Videnov is accepting the blame for others and should not agree to the revision of the White Paper, the first version of which clearly set down the facts about the previous nomenklatura and how it had illegally set up its present-day business.

The professional and individual incompatibility existing between the secretaries of the Interior Minister is an open secret, Nikolay Dobrev pointed out. These people are captives of transient events and petty problems, their style of work and conduct is made up of petty intrigues, calumniating others, and feathering their own nests, Dobrev believed. In his view, corruption can no longer be allowed to cause the disintegration of the system's leading cadres. Dobrev said that all the recent scandals and political provocations were based on information provided by Interior Ministry services.

"Change" was the unifying theme of the plenum, according to Nikolay Kamov. In his view, it is also needed in the Council of Ministers. So far, the cabinet had not managed to win respect in the fight against crime. The shortcoming of the Democratic Left Parliamentary Group, he said, is that it feels that it carries through decisions, but has no hand in drafting them. Kamov was alarmed by the fact that paid dissidents pay toadying compliments to their bosses in the BSP Supreme Council, while the voices of the workers are silenced. He further said that the meat for intrigues comes from within, not from the media. "You have no right not to be aware that those who sing Hosannas to you today will be the first to crucify you tomorrow," Kamov declared, turning to address Videnov in person.

The atmosphere of tolerance and acceptance of criticism has worsened to a critical level, Aleksandur Marinov stated in his further contribution to the topic. It is wrong to consider that the media attacks are only ill-intentioned. In Marinov's view, the government has already used up its initial stock of credit. He saw the main political task to be to strengthen the administration, without which the party's chances of winning the presidential elections will be reduced.

Georgi Pirinski made a call for singleness of political thought. He disputed the what he described as the allusion made in the report to the fact that prior to 1992 the BSP had practiced a policy of unprincipled conciliation, a simulation of national consensus. The minister also took note of a charge of "treachery" at that time, which he categorically refused to accept. He noted that the report failed to mention the DUMA problem, which in his view has affected the party's authority. Let us not confuse a strong government with government by the rule of force, he appealed to his audience. In Pirinski's view, the government has to specify the aims and tasks in its 1996 program, and only in such a context think of making personnel changes.

Krasimir Premyanov, chairman of the Democratic Left Parliamentary Group, called upon Videnov to get rid of those of his officials or advisers who misappropriate for themselves the rights of politicians or ministers. In all, 29 speakers rose to state their views on the subject addressed by the meeting. DUMA will publish some of the statements in full. The meeting continued to discuss late into the night the draft of the resolution, which we will also publish.

Bulgaria: OSD Leader Kyuranov Assesses Plenum

AU1303155196 Sofia Khorizont Radio Network in Bulgarian 1400 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] On 13 March in Sofia, a news conference of the Alliance for Social Democracy [OSD] in the Bulgarian Socialist Party [BSP] took place. OSD Chairman Chavdar Kyuranov assessed the last BSP Supreme Council plenum as an event at which a critical review of the work of the cabinet and the party itself has been made. According to him and the OSD in general, the idea must be rejected that everything achieved since 10 November 1989 is a mistake.

Czech Republic: Daily: Holan Unwilling To Investigate Tender

AU1303140696 Prague MLADA FRONTA DNES in Czech 12 Mar 96 p 2

["Analysis" by Jaroslav Kmenta: "The Defense Minister Has No Desire To Investigate the Tender Affair"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prague—Defense Minister Vilem Holan (Christian Democratic Union-Czechoslovak People's Party [KDU-CSL]) has made it clear that he does not intend to start a war in the governing coalition on account of the canceled Army tender for a staff information system and, therefore, will not investigate the tender process.

Holan has decided not to ask the appropriate authorities to investigate the suspicions that the competition for the tender was manipulated. Thus, he has confirmed that he will pay no heed to the reports about the pressuring of certain members of the selection commission. "As far as I am concerned, it is a nonexistent tender. One must go forward in this department. Allowing ourselves to be held back by a retrospective investigation into these matters would be extremely bad," claims the minister.

This tender, worth almost 4 billion korunas, has shown absolutely clearly for the first time that each selection of a supplier to reequip the Army is perhaps accompanied by the unprecedented interest of various political forces. This time, the Civic Democratic Party [ODS] was accused of trying to influence the course of the selection procedure. On the other hand, it has been critical for some time of the KDU-CSL—whose members include Holan and two of his deputies—for obscuring economic management within the defense department and for keeping some of the money from the tenders in its party coffers.

Some members of the General Staff's officer corps, who are aware of the details of the selection procedure, disagree with Holan's decision not to look into the canceled tenders and are put out by it. "These suspicions are so well-ounded that they should be investigated. Because it is now being made clear that it is pointless to investigate something retrospectively, everything may be repeated next time," claims a senior Army official.

The Army has at least three cogent arguments for investigating the tender. Apart from a few groundless disclosures, it has, for example, the letter from an employee of the E.D.S. company, allegedly Bronislav Mertlik, all of whose information on the interference by his firm and the intervention by ODS officials has, after verification, turned out to be true.

Holan could also hand over to his investigative bodies the information report in which his first deputy, Petr Necas (ODS), intervened last November, a few days after the end of the selection procedure, on behalf of canceling the tender.

According to Army officials, other grounds supporting the initiation of an investigation arise from the selection commission's proceedings. Namely, just before the completion of the competition, when it was already obvious that the winner would be Unisys and that E.D.S. would be second, one of its members altered the prices of the computer systems on offer. Following this manipulation, the Unisys company's project was listed as the most expensive, which later served as one of the reasons for canceling the tender.

According to a highly placed Army official, there are even two more written statements from officers on the influencing of the competition. "Two officers apparently admit that someone tried to acquire them for their objectives. It would be a pity if this fact were to be passed over because of some political game," stated the Army source.

Representatives of the General Staff, whose decision-making is not guided by political interests and so are detached from these matters, maintain that Holan is a good tactician but a not too practical defense minister. "By not entering into this affair strenuously, he is sending a signal to his government partners that he is interested in calm within the coalition in the run-up to the elections. Nevertheless, he is demonstrating unintentionally to his people within the department and to the companies competing for tenders worth billions that they do not have to be concerned," said a member of the General Staff's officer corps.

Slovakia: Meciar Comments on Treaty With Hungary

AU1303140296 Bratislava SLOVENSKA REPUBLIKA in Slovak 11 Mar 96 p 3

[Report by TASR: "Vladimir Meciar: There Is No Claim to Autonomy in the Text of the Treaty"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bratislava—Regarding Slovak-Hungarian relations, there are several factors that can be termed positive, Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar told Slovak Radio's Radio Journal program on 9 March. "This applies, in particular, to bilateral relations, to Slovak-Hungarian interstate relations, from which the confrontational tone has disappeared. Another positive signal is that progress has also been achieved in Romanian-Hungarian negotiations. A positive signal is being awaited, in particular, in connection with the deliberations of the EU intergovernmental commission in Turin, which is dealing with questions of European strategy. An unsettled dispute between neighbors would mean closed doors for both of them in further decisionmaking," Vladimir Meciar added.

He went on to say that those are the international political aspects of the present decisionmaking process on the Slovak-Hungarian treaty. "Of course, the treaty also has its internal dimension, to which we have been drawing citizens' attention by pointing out that there is no claim to territorial autonomy in the treaty and that any interpretation of the treaty in favor of autonomy is not only at odds with the text of the treaty but with the fundamental interests of the Slovak Republic," the prime minister stressed. He noted that laws are being adopted that guarantee the enactment of the treaty but that also erect a barrier to ethnic and collective rights going beyond it.

Vladimir Meciar expressed the wish that a model of coexistence with normal interpersonal relations take shape, in which everyone living in southern Slovakia could shed his fear. "The Hungarians fear that someone wants to assimilate or expel them. The Slovaks fear that, if they are the minority again, they will be expelled from the southern territories," Vladimir Meciar said. He called for a return to the values of humanity, respect, and understanding, to values that once existed in southern Slovakia.

Slovakia: Foreign Ministry Assails Hungarian Criticism

LD1303222796 Bratislava Rozhlasova Stanica Slovensko Network in Slovak 1700 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] According to its deputy minister Jozef Sestak, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has expressed surprise at the recent statements made by Hungarian Foreign Ministry officials and some members of the Hungarian parliament in connection with our internal affairs. Our side cannot but view these statements as inappropriate, mainly yesterday's statement by Istvan Szent-Ivanyi, the state secretary at the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, who said that the bill proposed by parliament on the territorial and administrative division of the Slovak Republic breaches several stipulations of the basic bilateral Slovak-Hungarian treaty.

Jozef Sestak also said that such views are at variance with reality and that our Ministry of Foreign Affairs resolutely rejected similar statements that were not based on facts and that misled and traumatized the international public.

The bill proposed by the legislature on the territorial and administrative division of our country does not breach any of the stipulations of the framework agreement, the statement says.

Slovakia: Anti-Hungarian Discrimination in Schools Noted

LD1303204496 Bratislava Slovak Radio Network in Hungarian 1400 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement [MKDH] believes that when working out the territorial reorganization, the government took into consideration only political issues. The state apparatus and bureaucracy prevented the extension of the scope of authority of self governments, one of the most important of which would be the decentralization of schools, said Laszlo Szigeti, a parliamentary deputy.

The MKDH has learned that the education director of the Nove Zamky [Hungarian: Ersekujvar] District, exceeding his scope of authority, ordered the school principles in the district to change their bilingual school stamps to ones in one language and to remove from the walls of school buildings the Hungarian-language signs as soon as possible.

Slovakia: Postponement of Meciar's Asia Trip Questioned

AU1303165496 Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak 12 Mar 96 p 1

[Article by Ivan Horsky: "Meciar Will Not Travel to Malaysia, Singapore, and Japan at This Time"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It has been rumored since 8 March that Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar, leading a great entourage, has postponed his trip to Singapore and Malaysia (an official visit) and to Japan, where he was invited by some leading Japanese firms, which not only organized but allegedly financed the trip.

Because the prime minister refers to Slovakia as a Central European tiger (apparently with the intention of comparing it with some of the fast developing Asian countries, including Singapore and Malaysia), we began to question why the visit was postponed, given the importance of that region to the Slovak economy.

In response to a NARODNA OBRODA question, government spokesman Ludmila Bulakova said that the prime minister postponed the trip because of scheduling difficulties. According to him, the priority task right now is to ratify the Slovak-Hungarian basic treaty before the Turin European Union summit on 28-29 March. Heads of associated countries, including Meciar, have been invited to attend the forum. The Asian tour was not to begin, however, until 30 March, when, according to repeated promises by both the prime minister and the head of Slovak diplomacy, this controversial item on the agenda of the Slovak Parliament should have been long settled.

We also asked the Foreign Ministry for an official statement. Press Department Director Juraj Matejovsky was not available, so we do not have an official statement. Other sources at that office confirmed unofficially, however, that the prime minister's trip was postponed for technical reasons. It is common practice, according to them, and the schedule of Slovak representatives traveling abroad is allegedly often changed, even in the middle of the planned trip.

Other sources, however, have indicated that there are entirely different reasons behind the postponement. The visit to Japan, which was to be a working visit and was to take place at the invitation of leading enterprises and under their auspices, was allegedly canceled by the organizers. The reason: They invited 20 people to accompany the prime minister and he allegedly named at least double that number as members of his entourage, which is not considered exactly polite in Japan.

Slovakia: Anti-Meciar Referendum Nets 200,000 Signatures

AU1303161096

[FBIS Report] Bratislava SME in Slovak on 11 March carries on page 11 a full-page advertisement by businessman Robert Krajnak from Stupava, the organizer of a petition for a referendum on the following question: "Are you in favor of Vladimir Meciar's being recalled from the post of Slovak prime minister?" The advertisement includes the facsimile of a petition sheet that supporters of the referendum are asked to sign and send to the following address: Robert Krajnak, Mail Box 10, 900 31 Stupava.

The bulk of the advertisement consists of statements received by Krajnak from various parts of the country in response to his initiative. Most reactions express support for the referendum and appreciate the "courage" of its organizer. Some signatories mention that many opponents of Meciar are afraid of signing the petition because, as one signatory puts it, "they fear that you [Krajnak] may be a supporter of the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia and Meciar's party is trying to obtain a list of people who oppose him."

The advertisement mentions that "only 150,001 more signatures are needed" to reach 350,000, the number of signatures required under Article 95 of the Slovak Constitution to call a referendum.

Slovakia: Commentary Mocks U.S. Human Rights Criticism

AU1303145796 Bratislava NOVA SMENA MLADYCH in Slovak 8 Mar 96 p 3

[Commentary by Miroslav Svicky: "Double Standard—Worse Than Police Stick"]

[FBIS Translated Text] There are two ways of doing things that are not completely correct; for example, you forget your ID card at home. A policeman asks you for identification, and as you have no documents, they put you in their patrol car. People see this and think: "Well, finally they caught some delinquent." They do not have enough information about you, and their conclusion is erroneous. At the same time they will not notice a well-dressed gentleman who passes them with a briefcase full of millions—either proceeds from stolen national property or "made" in narcotics. The gentleman gives an impression of decency and is well aware of how to manipulate gullible people; he knows when to point the finger at you.

Erroneous feelings can also be evoked on the international level. Some political circles, including some in the United States, would like it if Slovakia privatized the strategically important sectors of the economy or, to be more precise, if the government gave up its control over agriculture, transportation, the power industry, and telecommunications. They are also troubled by the government's not having sold our property immediately to foreign investors. For this the U.S. Department of State openly reproaches the government of a sovereign state—the Slovak Republic—in its "Report on Human Rights for 1995."

Immediately thereafter it finds thousands of other "lapses"; for example, that the broadcast license of the Radio Free Europe was extended by only one year in Slovakia, when this station (funded by the U.S. Congress) applied for a three-year extension. As if there were a chance for the Slovak legislature to establish a radio station to broadcast to the United States.... Or the Slovak Government is criticized in the report for condemning racial intolerance only 10 days after a Romany was immolated (while Slovak representatives had condemned intolerance many times previously). Does the U.S. Government issue a new statement every time a racially motivated murder takes place in the United States? That is not very likely. "A citizen from Sierra Leone was beaten up in a Bratislava tavern," the U.S. "Department" report writes. That is not a joke, but a fact. There is no U.S. report listing U.S. bars in which blacks, Mexicans, or foreigners are beaten up. The size of such a report would certainly be like an encyclopedia. It is especially remarkable at a time when U.S. fascist gangs are shooting foreigners in full daylight at the crossroads in some of the states of the union. "Despite protests from the Jewish community, celebrations of Jozef Tiso took place, with the education minister in attendance," the report also states. At the same time, it is the U.S. Government that keeps approving the celebrations of its racist presidents, who had Native American warriors, women, and children executed, and who also took part in the genocide of the indigenous American population. To date, the U.S. Government has not even returned to them the land that, according to the bilateral treaties still in effect, belongs to the nations of the original Americans. Moreover, as a rule, these Americans do not have even a fraction of our alternative education, criticism of which is noted in the report. We have not even mentioned the complete absence in effect of any ethnic broadcast in the nationwide media.

Several years ago the U.S. Congress received with all honors the Tibetan Dalai Lama—to demonstrate its disagreement with the Chinese occupation of Tibet. It was a nice gesture from the "world's policeman." It is interesting, however, that the political leaders of the original Americans have the road to their "own" Congress blocked. Our Foreign Ministry has not drafted a report about that.

Slovakia: Commentary Examines U.S. Human Rights Report

AU1303184496 Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak 9 Mar 96 p 3

[Commentary by Julius Gembicky: "The World Listens Not Only to the Opposition's Voice but Also to the 'Jingles' From Pasienky"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The majority of coalition politicians, but also the part of the public in Slovakia inclined toward them, overreact to any—even well-intentioned—signs of criticism aimed at the current government. Slovakia's power-wielding team also suspects the representatives and institutions from the advanced democracies of at least artificially fostered ill will toward a young and successful state that was the most pleasant mistake made by the global financial institutions with regard to the macroeconomic results for last year. First and foremost, it considers the opposition—which, according to a statement made by the prime minister at the most recent Movement for a Democratic Slovakia [HZDS] meeting in Pasienky, does not give Slovakia anything, but merely calls it names—to be the source of adverse propaganda. According to the implied logic of such a simplistic idea, an opposition press and media sustained by foreign capital is its janizary servant.

The most recent evidence of such a "conspiracy" against Slovakia, in the eyes of HZDS Deputy J. Smolec, is the U.S. State Department's "Report on Human Rights in 1995" that also disclosed alarming trends pointing to a divergence from democratic principles in the Slovak Republic. Certain credible accusations were made in the aforementioned report, accusations of the politically motivated dismissals of state administration officials, threats made against the opponents of government policy, misuse of police authority, and interference in the electronic media. The part on Slovakia was published in SLOVENSKA REPUBLIKA. In a commentary, the chief editor of the government daily suspects the authors of drawing their information on the Slovak Republic from only one opposition daily.

It is not out of the question that some of the comments have confirmed that the Slovak press and media are being monitored and analyzed. But, Slovak constitutional officials should surely be more aware that the source material for such considerations are, first and foremost, their statements and remarks. In essence, it does not matter whether they make them on party soil, in the legislature, in the media, or at meetings of their supporters; although, naturally, official statements carry a different weight in international and interstate relations than the rally "jingles" in Bratislava's Pasienky. Even in a favorable and boisterous atmosphere, they should not seize upon ill-considered, confrontational, and ridiculing statements. The world is aware that real government measures will follow the announcement made at a meeting about bank privatization, that the bond method and a privatization fund hunt will follow the sounding of coupon privatization's retreat. When the prime minister publicly announces a change of investigator in the M. Kovac Jr. case, he will indeed assign it to Banska Bystrica investigators. And when V. Meciar is captivated by the notion of Gottwald's slogan "We will not allow the Republic to be subverted," then, at an extraordinary evening session of the government, he will indeed include additionally in the agenda arrangements for the amendment of the Penal Code. Perhaps the world's strongest banking and stock exchange institutions have stamped in their minds Meciar's inconspicuous summation that "if those who call names were to shut up for three months, the koruna's exchange rate would go up." With a view to not just Slovakia—but they too—not losing out on the planned bit of business.

Slovakia: Kukan Elected 'Shadow Prime Minister'

AU1303132596 Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak 11 Mar 96 pp 1, 5

[Article by Zita Sujova: "DU Republican Assembly: J. Moravcik Again Chairman, L. Cernak Again Deputy Chairman"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Bratislava—The Republican Assembly of the Democratic Union of Slovakia [DU], held in Bratislava on 9 and 10 March, confirmed Jozef Moravcik in the post of DU chairman. He received 103 out of 172 votes, while his only opponent Ludovit Cernak won 69 votes. Eduard Kukan gave up his nomination for party chairman. The assembly approved Jozef Moravcik's proposal that the number of deputy chairmen be raised from four to five. District assemblies had nominated 11 candidates, six of whom declined the offer (R. Filkus, L. Harach, J. Rozsival, V. Vaskovic, A. Hrnko, and P. Niznansky). The assembly confirmed the incumbent deputy chairmen in their posts, with the following jurisdictions: Ludovit Cernak (elected by 137 out of 169 votes) will be deputy chairman for local policy issues; Milan Knazko (114 votes) for foreign relations; Jan Budaj (99) for public relations and mass media; and Roman Kovac (87) for internal party affairs. A new face among DU deputy chairmen is Eduard Kukan with 161 votes. He will be in charge of program and conceptual issues and will hold the position of so-called shadow prime minister in the party. [passage omitted]

In an interview for NARODNA OBRODA, Ludovit Cernak explained the change of his original decision (announced at the DU Republican Board meeting on 3 February) not to run for a top party position because of "pressure from below," that is, from district assemblies and voters, who, as he said, regard him as a "cementing" element. [passage omitted] "I have decided to stay on and to support the chairman so that we can show that healthy competition does not have to mean potential split or disagreement," he said. [passage omitted]

Slovakia: Media Bill Directed 'Against Journalists'

AU1203155996 Bratislava SME in Slovak 8 Mar 96 p 3

[Article by "II": "According to V. Holina, It Is Not True That the Appraised Version of the Press Law Was Discussed"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bratislava—On 6 March, the Council for the Mass Media met for three hours in the meeting hall of the Cabinet to discuss a single item: the bill on public information media (known as the press law). Although it is stated in the explanatory report on the bill that the version of the press law under review is the one drafted during the appraisal process in mid-February, Vladimir Holina, chancellor of the Slovak Syndicate of Journalists (SSN), who is member of the council, commented on the meeting saying that "this is not true." "A completely new bill has been drafted, which had not been subjected to an open inquiry. The original draft comprised 25 articles. The new one has 35 articles, plus a preamble," he stressed. As SSN Chairman Jan Fule told us at the beginning of February, after a meeting of SSN representatives, the Association of Slovak Journalists, the Publishers Association, and the Ministry of Culture, a bill had been drafted that respected all principal comments from the journalistic and publishing community and was in conformity with analogous legislation in Western Europe. As we have found out, the latest text of the draft came into being with the personal participation by Culture Minister Ivan Hudec, who became chairman of the Mass Media Council on 27 February in lieu of Deputy Prime Minister Katarina Tothova. Although, officially, the change was justified by Katarina Tothova's other commitments, according to a reliable source, it was implemented at a cabinet meeting after [minister of labor, social affairs, and the family] Olga Keltosova proposed the change on the grounds of a political coalition agreement. As we learned at the SSN Secretariat, they managed to obtain a copy of the latest draft only after several reminders on 1 March. In his comments on the latest draft, L. Sefcak, chairman of the SSN Legal Commission, stated that "the majority of the newly formulated provisions appear to be directed against journalists. Moreover, provisions designed to protect journalists and their work have been deleted." Commenting on the course of the meeting of the Mass Media Council itself, V. Holina observed: "None of the modifying proposals suggested by the SSN Legal Commission have been accepted. The outcome of the vote was the same as in the case of opposition proposals in Parliament." The new draft of the press law is to be discussed by the government's Legislative Council next week and by the government before the end of the month.

Slovakia: Comment: Freedom Endangered by New Media Bill

AU1203194396 Bratislava SME in Slovak 9 Mar 96 p 4

[Commentary by Lubomir Lintner: "Not European. Slovak at Any Price!"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Commenting on the 13th version of the bill on public information media (the so-called press law) at the beginning of February, Jan Fule, chairman of the Slovak Syndicate of Journalists (SSN), said that its wording was extremely favorable. Alas, the last few days show that it is not advisable to be a prophet in Slovakia. In a rare display of unity, representatives of both organizations of journalists and representatives of publishers all agreed on the February version. The Council for the Mass Media was to be presented with a bill that would have European dimensions. Only a month later everything is different. The Mass Media Council is no longer headed by Katarina Tothova (she was replaced by Minister Ivan Hudec) and the bill has acquired Hudec's specifications. Whereas, one month ago, the text did not contain problems of ethics, this time they are embedded in the preamble. Whereas the previous version did not envisage fines, in the latest version these reach sums of up to 1 million korunas, which could bankrupt a great many media. The SSN Legal Commission proposed that the respective article be deleted, which Ivan Hudec strictly rejected. Other objections met with a similar fate. Referring to the course of the meeting, V. Holina, member of the Mass Media Council, observed that it reminded him of the voting machinery in parliament. At the same time, it needs to be said that the latest draft did not go through the appraisal process, even though in the explanatory report it is haughtily stated that this version arrived by way of agreement. Because I mentioned the Hudecite dimensions of the bill, let me explain that these are manifested, for example, in one article where the ban on spreading information propagating fascism, racism, and so forth was complemented with a ban on "information offending Slovak statehood in a covert or overt form." At the same time, there exists no ban on censorship in the draft. Now that the text has been assessed by legal experts, there is no doubt that journalists will nickname it "the muzzle law." If it passes in its present wording through the Legislative Council and the government, it surely will not pave our way to Europe. If, in its latest report on the observance of human rights in Slovakia, the U.S. State Department was able to say, leaving aside its other objections concerning the mass media sphere, that "the Slovak Government generally respects the freedom of speech and press freedom," the next report will be different with regard to this issue. Mr. Hudec, why should we be European? Let us be Slovak, whatever it costs!

Hungary: Security Gains by U.S. Military Presence

LD1303223396 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 1700 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] With the military equipment moved to Hungary by the U.S. troops stationed in Taszar [southwestern Hungary], Hungary's security has significantly increased. This is what the parliament's Defense Committee found in Taszar today. Laszlo Farago reports.

[Farago] More than 30,000 soldiers have so far been stationed at the Taszar base, and what can be seen here also shows that NATO and IFOR [Implementation Force] do indeed take Bosnian peacemaking seriously. This is also in accord with Hungary's interests, said [Defense Committee chairman] Imre Mecs, who visited the peacekeepers' Taszar base for the second time as head of the committee. [passage omitted]

The committee chairman did not find anything serious to complain about on the basis of what he saw. I asked Imre Mecs if the fact that the Hungarian training flights had to be temporarily relocated was jeopardizing Hungary's security.

[Begin Mecs recording] No, it does not jeopardize it. On the contrary, the fact that modern landing and background equipment was brought here even increases security. [end recording]

Hungary: Spokesman Views Kovacs-Primakov Talks

AU1303141796 Budapest NEPSZAVA in Hungarian 13 Mar 96 pp 1, 9

[Interview with Hungarian foreign affairs spokesman Gabor Szentivanyi by Andrej Kiss; place and date not given: "Can We Expect Russian Softening?—Foreign Spokesman on Laszlo Kovacs's Moscow Visit"]

[FBIS Translated Text] At his news conference following the Russian-Hungarian foreign ministerial talks, Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov indicated Moscow's willingness for compromise on NATO's expansion. Primakov is said to find it possible that Moscow's stance will soften if NATO's military machinery does not get closer to the Russian borders. We asked foreign affairs spokesman Gabor Szentivanyi if this was Primakov's stance also at the talks with Foreign Minister Laszlo Kovacs.

[Szentivanyi] Answering a question at the news conference, Primakov said that Russia's stance on NATO's expansion had not changed or eroded. At the same time he added that, in the framework of an overall security architecture, Russia is striving to find solutions to the security concerns that exist in Europe. This kind of flexible attitude dominated the talks. The atmosphere of the talks was businesslike and constructive.

[Kiss] Does this mean that we cannot say that Russia's stance was rigidly dismissive?

[Szentivanyi] Russia is worried about two things. One, NATO's unlimited expansion which, in Moscow's view, would violate Russia's security interests. On the other hand, Russia would be disturbed by the approach of NATO's military structure to its borders. However, as regards Hungarian-Russian relations, they did not raise any objections to Hungary choosing western orientation. At the talks, the approach of "yes-no" was not dominant. The aspects of NATO expansion which give concerns to Russia, and the European security system resting on several pillars were given a big emphasis at the talks. During the talks, the possibility of finding a compromise solution to the concerns arose.

[Kiss] After the initial worries, many people believe that it is easier to achieve a compromise with the tough-negotiating Primakov. What impression did he make on you?

[Szentivanyi] Primakov is a well-prepared diplomat with thorough theoretical and concrete current knowledge. His calculable attitude is also emphasized by western assessments. Primakov is a first-rate politician, and seeking solutions and compromises is part of first-rate politics. It emerged at the talks that this possibility also exists now.

[Kiss] According to all indications, stagnation still characterizes bilateral relations. How will the old problems be affected by setting up a new committee for solving economic issues?

[Szentivanyi] In Moscow, we raised the problems of our trade relations: the issue of debt, the trade deficit, and the issue of delivering and transiting the Yamburg gas. It was suggested at this point that it would be expedient to set up a working group which will examine within a short time in which areas it is possible to reduce the trade deficit and what export-import measures can be brought. We expect further coordination when the Hungarian education minister visits Moscow in April. From Russia's point of view, the return of artifacts and the issue of restitution affects a number of European countries. The law on restitution should be passed in the Russian parliament before the end of this year. At the same time, if was indicated in Moscow that they do not wish to burden their European relations with these issues.

Hungary: Russian 'Compromise' on NATO Rejected

LD1303224096 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 1700 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] According to Ferenc Somogyi, administrative state secretary of the Foreign Ministry, no far-reaching conclusions should be drawn from the readiness for compromise that the Russian foreign minister has indicated regarding the expansion of NATO. Csaba Poor interviewed Ferenc Somogyi.

[Begin recording] [Poor] The essence of a possible compromise drawn up by Yevgeniy Primakov is that NATO could admit new members, but they would only join NATO's political, not military, organization. Ferenc Somogyi said, however, that Hungarian diplomacy wants to achieve more than that.

[Somogyi] This so-called partial membership does not coincide with the endeavors of Hungarian diplomacy and Hungarian foreign policy. We imagine our NATO membership and Hungary's integration in general in such a way that, in exchange for undertaking all the obligations, we would like to enjoy all the rights. I would be careful not to draw far-reaching conclusions from a meeting where the possibility of a compromise was indeed mentioned, but all the elements of their hitherto rejectionist stance were also repeated.

However, in my opinion, it is by all means a positive thing that perhaps there seems to be a realistic chance for a substantial dialogue on the issue. [end recording]

Hungary: Russia's Approach to NATO Analyzed

AU1303143796 Budapest MAGYAR HIRLAP in Hungarian 13 Mar 96 p 7

[Editorial by Zoltan Gyevai: "Primakov's Points"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Russia cannot hinder NATO's eastern expansion, but it affects the pace of this process. This is the message behind what the Russian foreign minister told his Hungarian colleague during their talks in Moscow, but this message was obviously intended for a broader audience. Mention of the word "compromise" in connection with NATO expansion can be music to the ears of politicians in countries that want to become NATO members. However, the pleasure of listening to music is somewhat disturbed by the fact that seeking compromise will automatically slow the process down and, let us admit it, NATO itself is tempted to do that.

According to one solution outlined by Primakov, the military machinery of NATO would not approach Russia's borders. This means two things: First, no foreign NATO troops and weapons would be deployed on the territory of the new NATO members, just as in the former GDR after Germany's reunification. Second, the new members would only join the political structure and would not participate in the military cooperation. This scenario, or similar scenarios are hardly in Hungary's interest, because this would limit our interference in NATO affairs. At first glance, however, Primakov's point according to which Moscow mainly opposes NATO's unlimited expansion seems to be preferable.

This proves that Russia makes a difference between candidates, and it would more easily accept Hungary's NATO membership, as Hungary has no direct borders with Russia. However, the Russian conditions could still make the schedule uncertain, for example if Poland is excluded from the limited NATO expansion. If we add the complex domestic political situation in Russia and the instability of their diplomacy to all this, it is justified to refrain from overestimating the Russian concessions.

B-H: President Izetbegovic Released From Hospital

AU1403132296 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1300 GMT 14 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Considering the good results achieved in his treatment to date, President Izetbegovic left the Kosevo Clinical Center today and was transferred to home care. According to the team of doctors, the stage of home care will last at least two months, and will require doctors' supervision.

B-H: Serbs Abandon Another Municipality in Sarajevo

LD1303120196 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1037 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Geneva, March 12 (TANJUG)—Authorities of the Muslim-Croat Federation took over control Tuesday [12 March] of another Serb municipality in Sarajevo, Ilidza, but without its 25,000 Serb residents, UNHCR [UN High Commissioner for Refugees] spokesman Ron Redmond said Tuesday.

The same will be the case with the municipality of Grbavica, which is to be handed over by Serbs to the Muslim-Croat Federation on March 19 under the Dayton peace accords, Redmond said.

He said only about 2,000 Serbs remained in Grbavica.

Redmond said it was the UNHCR's position that Bosnian Serb authorities were primarily responsible for the fact that Serbs have been moving out of the five Sarajevo municipalities which are being taken over by the Muslim-Croat Federation.

He said the U.N. humanitarian organization could only express regret and disappointment.

Diplomatic sources here say the Serb leaders in Pale have made a big political and national mistake by spurring Sarajevo Serbs to leave.

The sources say Muslim authorities are also to blame for not having provided sufficient guarantees to Serbs and for failing to react to the harassment of the few remaining Serbs in Vogosca, Ilijas and Hadzici—the first three municipalities which were handed over.

Diplomatic sources also say that the small number of the U.N. civilian policemen, who are not armed, have not been an adequate guarantee for Sarajevo Serbs.

B-H: Looting, Rape Reported in Last Serb-Held Suburb

AU1303191296 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kris Janowski, the UNHCR [UN High Commissioner for Refugees] spokesman in Sarajevo, has stated today that looting continues in Grbavica and that trucks full of looted goods are leaving Grbavica daily.

Many of these trucks are not transporting the property of the people who live there. The looting is mainly being done by people who are breaking into other people's homes and looting them, Janowski says.

He also said that a woman of Bosniak nationality has informed UNHCR that she was raped in Grbavica four weeks ago. He also said that another rape case had been reported last weekend.

B-H: Sarajevo Firemen Put Out Grbavica Fires

AU1403095196 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 0900 GMT 14 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Sarajevo fire brigade has been called out six times within the last 24 hours. In all these cases the interventions were in Grbavica, in Lenjin Street and Radnicka Street, where the Serbs who are leaving this city district have been setting apartments on fire. The fires have been extinguished, but a lot of material damage has been caused.

B-H: Federation Authorities Find Serb Suburbs in Ruins

AU1403082296 Paris AFP in English 0112 GMT 14 Mar 96

[By Jacques Charmelot]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sarajevo, March 14 (AFP)—The authorities of Bosnia's Moslem-Croat federation who are moving into areas abandoned by the Bosnian Serbs under the Dayton agreement are finding little more than a heap of ruins.

The destruction resulting from the civil war and the vandalism committed by the Serbs before their departure shows what a huge job of reconstruction will be required throughout the country.

Along the line of the front which separated the formerly Serb-held suburbs from the rest of the city not a house, factory or other building seems to be left standing.

The roads, railways and tramlines running through these districts are in a terrible state, pitted by shell-holes, blocked by the wrecks of burnt-out vehicles and lacking equipment.

In the suburbs of Vogosca and Ilijas to the north, Hadzici and Ilidza to the west, the streets are littered with debris of all sorts, and buildings which have not been burned have been looted.

Military and civilian leaders responsible for implementing the Dayton peace plan consider that the most important task after the reunification of Sarajevo is to restore the stricken areas to life.

But there are problems, mainly stemming from the huge cost involved.

"What's missing is the money to put against building projects and the people working through the bureacracy to get the programme started," US Admiral Leighton Smith, commander of the multinational peace implementation force (IFOR), said Tuesday.

"We need to see money on the table and the projects started," he said. "It's the guys with the cranes and the bulldozers that are going to make the major difference in this peace process."

And Smith warned, "If the civilian side goes belly up the possibility of peace in here diminishes dramatically."

The staff of the top civilian representant, Carl Bildt, have laid down three levels of priority and three main areas to tackle.

"We must start with the infrastructure, highways, gas, electricity, water supply and the telephones," Victor Massena, an advisor to Bildt, told AFP.

And just repairing the damage is useless, when Sarajevo's services were already obsolete before the war. All installations must be brand new, in line with modern practice.

Seventy percent of Sarajevo's water leaks out of the pipes, and that does not include the shell-holes, an IFOR officer noted.

Rebuilding the city's industry will be a bit more complicated, Massena said, given that much of it employed outdated technology or produced goods that are no longer required.

Thus there is no question of reopening the arms factories at Vogosca and Hadzici, while the Volkswagen motor plant assembled the very first model of the Golf saloon, dating from the 1970s.

The Ilijas metalworks, responsible for toxic pollution, will also have to be refurbished.

Finally, rehousing the thousands of people who were expelled from their homes on the edge of the city by the Serbs or fled the fighting will be difficult, though the least expensive.

The Sarajevo housing office is distributing forms for returnees to apply for aid and the official responsible, Muhamed Zlatar, expects a brisk response.

But no cash is yet up front. The World Bank, the European Union and other bodies have pledged a total of 250 million dollars, but renewal schemes are still being considered.

But every cloud has a silver lining, observed a foreign consultant cynically. "In 1945 the Russians and the French looted everything from Germany—they got the old stuff, and the Germans brand new," he said.

B-H: Federal Police To Take Control in Foca 19 Mar

AU1403114496 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1100 GMT 14 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] According to the Dayton agreement, the federal police will take control over Ustikolina and Jabuka in the municipality of Foca on 19 March 1996. The Foca Municipality Presidium, in cooperation with the Gorazde Security Services Center, will inform citizens daily about the security situation in the regions of Ustikolina and Jabuka. Citizens will be allowed to move and remain only in the regions where mines and explosive devices have been removed, which will be marked by appropriate notices.

B-H: Croat Policemen To Join Federal Police in Ilidza

LD1303191496 Mostar Croatian Radio Herzeg-Bosnia in Serbo-Croatian 1700 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Yesterday's barring of Croat policemen from Kiseljak from entering Ilidza municipality runs contrary to the previous agreement between the Croat and Muslim side, IFOR [Implementation Force], and UN representatives have said today. Ankica Posavljak reports in more detail:

[Posavljak] The fact that the Croat police from Kiseljak were prevented yesterday from entering Ilidza and that nine Croat policemen were not deployed in the police station in Ilidza was explained by the Bosniak side by the unsuitable uniform of the Croat police. At a meeting held today the Croat side was represented by Jozo Leutar, deputy minister of interior of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The meeting resulted in the order that in the course of this afternoon Croat policemen nevertheless enter Ilidza, accompanied by IFOR, in their blue uniforms. Jozo Leutar comments:

[Leutar] You know what happened yesterday, that Croat policemen were turned back for one reason only—they came in their blue uniforms, uniforms of the police of the Croat Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia. We had a meeting in Kiseljak yesterday with a representative of the international police force and we agreed to meet today. Participants in today's meeting were Mr. Steiner [deputy to Carl Bildt]; an IFOR representative, a general, myself and Milan Krizanovic, chief of the police in Kiseljak. [Bosnian Interior] Minister Hebib and Enes Bezdrob, head of the center of security services, were present on behalf of our partners.

Our previous agreements were confirmed. Mr. Steiner and [the international police] representatives insisted that the agreement which preceded the takeover of Ilidza by the police forces be respected. Doubtless the Croat policemen must enter and work there in blue uniforms until a decision on one uniform on the federal territory is made.

[Posavljak] And when will they finally enter Ilidza?

[Leutar] It was agreed that they would enter Ilidza and its police station at 1600 [1500 GMT] today together with representatives of the international police and IFOR.

[Posavljak] What did Mr. Hebib and Mr. Bezdrob have to say to the idea that Croat policemen change from their blue into green uniforms?

[Leutar] These are their wishes only, and I would not like to comment on them. It is out of the question, that is clear and clearly regulated by the law. Until one uniform is chosen, Croat police will remain in blue uniforms. Today, as I said, nine Croat policemen in blue uniforms will enter the police station in Ilidza with IFOR and the international police.

[Posavljak] How will they be deployed? I am asking this because we know that a large part of the area of Stup, the former local communities of Stup I and II, belong to Croats. Will Croat policemen be concentrated in this particular area?

[Leutar] As this is the police force of the city of Sarajevo, they will be deployed in the areas which used to be under Serb control. [passage omitted]

B-H: Federal Partners Agree on Croat Policemen Deployment

AU1303190396 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The participants in today's meeting in the office of the high representative in Sarajevo, which was presided over by Ambassador Michael Steiner, confirmed the earlier agreement between the federal partners that the nine professional Croat policemen who had been in the police force in Sarajevo before be part of the federal police in Ilidza.

Until the introduction of the new federal police uniforms, the Croat policemen should continue to wear their blue uniforms. They should also wear a ribbon on their sleeves reading: The Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Police, City of Sarajevo, as well as the appropriate badges.

It has also been agreed that the Croat policemen will enter Ilidza from the direction of Kiseljak together with the international police forces at 1600 today to join the federal police.

The following participated in the meeting: Avdo Hebib, minister of internal affairs of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina; his deputy Jozo Leutar; Enes Bezdrob, head of the Sarajevo Security Service Center; Mladen Tolo, head of the Kiseljak police; special UN representative Iqbal Riza; Robert Wasserman, deputy chief of the UN international police force; and General Michael Walker, who was representing IFOR [Implementation Force].

The UN international forces will inform high representative Carl Bildt on the implementation of the agreement reached today.

B-H: Croat Police Turned Away Again Over Uniform Dispute

AU1303200796 Paris AFP in English 1910 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sarajevo, March 13 (AFP)—Bosnian Croat police, due to have joined Muslim-Croat Federation police in a Sarajevo suburb, were turned away for the second time in two days Wednesday [13 March] in a row over uniforms, UN officials said.

The nine officers, from the hardline Bosnian Croat town of Kiseljak, were due to have started work with Federation police in Ilidza following an agreement reached earlier Wednesday.

On arrival in Ilidza however, the district station commander told the officers they could not work in their blue Croat uniforms, only in civilian dress or the green uniforms of the mainly Muslim Federation force, a spokesman for a UN police force, Alexander Ivanko, said.

It was the second time the Croats have been turned away despite an agreement reached between the Muslim Federation interior minister and his Croat deputy.

The Croats were also turned back on Tuesday, the day the federation police began work in the suburb relinquished by Bosnian Serbs in line with Bosnia's peace agreement.

Mladen Tolo, the Croat commander of Kiseljak's police and one of those turned away, said: "This means there is no federation. The Bosnian (Muslim) side is not accepting us as partners and allies."

Tensions have started to rise within the Federation, one of the two entities that makes up post-war Bosnia and a cornerstone of the country's peace agreement.

Relations between hardline Croats in Kiseljak, west of the capital, and Bosnia's Muslim community have remained sour ever since the war fought between Muslims and Croats in 1993.

"This is a clear breach of the agreement reached earlier today (Wednesday)," Ivanko said. "It is another brick through the fragile window of the Federation."

Colum Murphy, a spokesman for Bosnia's High Representative, the lead international agency dealing with civilian matters which helped broker Wednesday's agreement, said he did not know why the pledge to allow the Croats to join the Federation force in Ilidza had not been honoured.

"Orders get diluted all down the line and get further diluted by old animosities," Murphy said.

B-H: Croats To Use 'All Means' To Resolve Mostar Dispute

LD1303201196 Mostar Croatian Radio Herzeg-Bosnia in Serbo-Croatian 1700 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In light of the latest events in Sarajevo and the letter by Muslim leader Alija Izetbegovic to the people of Mostar in which he threatened the Croat population with expulsion, Ivan Kristic asked Ivan Bender, president of the Chamber of Deputies and chairman of the Presidential Council of the Croat Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia, to comment:

[Begin recording] [Kristic] The latest events in Sarajevo clearly show how much the Muslims care about the federation and to what extent they are ready to recognize the equality of the Croat people. Mr. Bender, how are you going to respond? Are you going to wait for the constituent assembly of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina to meet or will the Croat reaction, Croat statements on these unfortunate events come before it?

[Bender] I must start by saying that the Muslim behavior did not take me by surprise and that it has strengthened my attitude and has made us even more resolute in pursuing the policy of the Croat Democratic Union [HDZ]. Under the existing agreements and the federal constitution, Sarajevo is a district under UN administration, it is the capital of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation and of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. No unilateral decisions can be passed and if passed they will be treated as nonexistent.

However, the Croats will not sit idly by. We shall take the necessary steps to ensure that the decisions passed are annulled officially. If this does not happen, we have adequate ways of responding. If not, then at the constituent assembly due to be held shortly [as heard]. The HDZ city committee has my full support and I believe that in conjunction with the HDZ presidency, Croat officials in the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation, and Croat representatives in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and with the representatives of the Croat people of the Croat Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia at the head, the city committee will be able to resolve this issue for the benefit of the Croats.

[Kristic] When it comes to the so-called federal or rather the Muslim police, which they have declared federal, their latest trick is to say that the police are in fact not a federal but a cantonal force. They have unilaterally turned Sarajevo into a Muslim canton and are now calling the police cantonal. How can it be cantonal when there is no agreement on the insignia for either the canton or the federation?

[Bender] It is their problem what they plan to do in the areas where the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army is in control; if they continue to behave in this manner, well, we have solutions to cope with it. There are areas which are controlled by the Croat Defense Council. I must stress that there is no federal police. Under the existing law, there is the police of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the federation consists of the grand counties and two peoples. In other words, it is what the two peoples agree on that will be put in practice. I would ask everyone to avoid using the term federal police and to use instead the police of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, thus indicating that the police consist of two parts, that the two peoples make up the police. What the Muslims will do if, as we say, they refuse to be brought to their senses, well, we shall find a solution, especially since the Croats have made it clear on several occasions that we are for a political solution, but if this is not possible, well, we shall go for the other solution.

[Kristic] Our people find it rather difficult to understand why and for how long we are expected to allow ourselves to be humiliated by and to give in to our federal partner. For instance, the Muslim army passes through Kresevo [central Bosnia], a purely Croat region, hurling abuse at the Croats, while at the same time the Croat civilians of Dastansko are not allowed to pass [Muslim-held territory] on the way to Kiseljak?

[Bender] Well, you see, it is not wrong if we, the Croats, because of the situation we are in and in the interest of Croatian policy and, primarily, of the Republic of Croatia and our president, from time to time endure something like this. But, of course, there is a limit to how much we can put up with and we are not prepared to go beyond it. Our message is clear: the Croats will no longer allow themselves to be provoked, humiliated; on the contrary, if we cannot solve things in any other way, we shall have to take adequate countermeasures.

[Kristic] Mr. Bender, how did you react to Alija Izetbegovic's latest letter to the citizens of Mostar in which he said that we, from the [Croat-populated] right bank of the Neretva, will end up like Sarajevo Serbs?

[Bender] This is Alija's view. But we, the Croats, shall show everyone that we do not intend to withdraw; that, on the contrary, Mostar is the capital of Herzegovina, of the Croat people, and will remain so, and we shall use all means at our disposal to resolve this. [end recording]

B-H: Silajdzic Says Zagreb Undermining Federation

AU1403131696 Paris AFP in English 1245 GMT 14 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Zagreb, March 14 (AFP)—Croatian President Franjo Tudjman's ruling party is deliberately blocking the development of Bosnia's Moslem-Croat federation, former Bosnian premier Haris Silajdzic said in an interview published Thursday [14 March].

"Certain people within Croatia's rightwing ruling Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) are blocking the development of the federation," he told the Croatian weekly GLOBUS.

Silajdzic, regarded in the west as a moderating influence in the Bosnian government, was one of the signatories of the 1994 accords which set up Bosnia's Moslem-Croat federation.

The federation is considered a lynchpin of the current peace process in Bosnia—sharing the country half and half with the rebel Serbs' Srpska Republika.

But it has been slow to come into existence because of the reluctance of the Bosnian Croats, backed by Zagreb, to merge with Moslem authorities.

"We have been discussing this federation for two years and it still doesn't exist because some people do not want it to exist," Silajdzic said.

"The greatest responsibility for this comes down to the Croatian politicians who harbouring ill-intentions towards Bosnia," he said.

Silajdzic, who was first foreign minister and then prime minister through most of the war in Bosnia, resigned from the government in January. He intends to form a new party to run in the elections due to be held in Bosnia later this year.

B-H: Croat Radio: Silajdzic Party 'Political Maneuver'

LD1303184896 Mostar Croatian Radio Herzeg-Bosnia in Serbo-Croatian 1700 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Elections in Bosnia-Herzegovina are expected in September this year. Campaigning has already begun and there is a lot of interest here and abroad in the new party established by Haris Silajdzic, former prime minister of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The party's unofficial name is the Party for Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Is this really a final farewell to fundamentalist Islamic ideas represented by Alija Izetbegovic or could it be a political ploy? Antun Mrkonjic comments:

[Mrkonjic] Allegedly dissatisfied with the Dayton provisions which have failed to preserve Bosnia-Herzegovina as a single state and with concessions granted to the Croat side in Mostar, former federal prime minister Dr. Haris Silajdzic has decided to take part in the elections with a new party which regards the struggle for an integral and democratic Bosnia-Herzegovina as its priority.

Silajdzic says that he intends to rally all healthy forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina. He is probably talking about opposition parties, healthy individuals in the Party of Democratic Action [SDA], and even wider. Dr. Silajdzic's statement, according to which democratic forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia should unite as soon as possible because that is the only way to preserve Bosnia's integrity and democracy, is therefore very important.

Even though he has not mentioned it publicly, it is evident that one of his goals—perhaps a long-term goal—is to destroy the Croatian Democratic Union [HDZ], both in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in Croatia. Political analysts have already begun to analyze Silajdzic's program and his relations with Alija Izetbegovic within the context of the current political climate, and international interests and political investments in the area in particular.

It seems that the nearest attempt at revealing the real intentions of Silajdzic's new party is an analysis according to which the goals of the new Party for Bosnia-Herzegovina are not essentially different from those goals planned long time ago by some Muslim intellectuals of Bosnia-Herzegovina led by Alija Izetbegovic—they spent several decades in jail for those goals.

Dr. Silajdzic and other close aides of Izetbegovic are aware of the fact that, for some time now, the international community has not regarded Izetbegovic as the key Muslim, the person with whom it wants to bring the peace process to a conclusion. There is no doubt that Izetbegovic is sick, but it is clear that he is slowly withdrawing from the political arena and giving up his position to a younger person who is able and who will, using the slogan: For a Democratic Bosnia-Herzegovina, lead the Muslim nation to its ultimate goal—the creation of a state in which that nation will dominate.

Even though this is a wise political maneuver in the preelection period, it is not certain that the Muslim leadership will be able to fool the world and gain the support of Germany and the United States in particular. The very fact that Silajdzic's invitation to democratic forces does not mention the HDZ, the strongest Bosnian Croat party, is a sign of a dangerous political ploy against our nation. Silajdzic's past, his many years in the SDA leadership, frequent statements in the foreign press directed against Croat interests, and particularly his firm links with fundamentalist regimes in Iran and Libya are a clear indication of his real plans and goals. Therefore, it is clear that there are no rifts among Muslim politicians—it is only a political maneuver and I hope that Croats have seen through it in time.

B-H: Mladic Denies Crimes, Dares NATO To Arrest Him

AU1403121296 Paris AFP in English 1156 GMT 14 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 14 (AFP)—Bosnian Serb military leader Ratko Mladic denied in an interview published Thursday [14 March] that he has committed war crimes and defied the international community to arrest him, saying the Serb people would protect him.

The Serb general told the Belgrade weekly NIN magazine that he "did not plan to play hide and seek" with NATO troops empowered to arrest him, but dared them to do so by drawing comparisons with the failure of US troops in Somalia to arrest warlord Mohamed Farah Aidid.

"I hope the incident with Aidid in Somalia taught them something," said Mladic, who is accused of war crimes by The Hague-based UN tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. "They had better accept the olive branch so that we can consolidate peace."

Mladic also told the magazine that "the Republika Srpska army did not take part in any crime and committed no crime."

"I am absolutely sure that no one—no individual or unit—had permission to do anything that goes against international rules of warfare," he said.

He added that the international community must understand that "I am worth a lot and I am under the protection of my people."

Mladic also denied the existence of mass graves containing the bodies of Moslems and Croats massacred by the Serbs during the nearly four-year war in Bosnia.

"World powers are inventing these so-called mass graves and are doing everything possible to find them but without success," he said.

"If we had wanted, not one Moslem would have come out alive from Srebrenica or Zepa," he added, referring to the two eastern Bosnian enclaves overrun by the Serbs in July 1995.

Mladic's army is suspected of carrying out a massacre during the assault on Srebrenica and according to the US State Department report, more than 7,000 people from the town are missing since the takeover and presumed dead.

But he added that even though the war in Bosnia was over the Serbs "must not consider that their work is done" as they could still recover territory lost in Bosnia and Croatia.

"If, from Belgrade all the way to the (Serb stronghold) of Banja Luka, we had spent less time organizing beauty contests and rather had concentrated on arming ourselves the outcome would have been different," he said.

He said that had no plan to abandon his post as he believed him army still needed him.

B-H: Mladic Interviewed, Rejects War Crime Accusations

AU1403133096 Vienna NEWS in German 14 Mar 96 pp 71-72

[Interview with Serb General Ratko Mladic by Renato Farina "in a wood near Pale"; date not given: "War Against the Whole World"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Farina] These pictures shocked the public most: This child was murdered by a sniper.

Someone ordered the murder. You, as the military chief, are held responsible for it...

[Mladic] I have seen many of these tragic pictures. Is this photograph real, or is it a montage?

[Farina] Unfortunately, it is real.

[Mladic] These children are innocent victims. I am sorry for their death. However, it is not me who is to blame for it, but the powerful foreign states who wanted this war. And, in addition: Who knows to which group this child belonged?

[Farina] He was a Muslim named Nermin Didovic, and he was seven years old when he died.

[Mladic] I saw dozens of Serb children in Banja Luka die. There nothing was heard of you, there you did not shed a single tear. But it remains a tragedy: I have always done everything to prevent such things. And we never waged war in the territory of the others.

[Farina] The Serbs sent tanks to Slovenia, parts of Croatia were conquered, and Bosnia's independence was suppressed...

[Mladic] The secession from the Yugoslav Federation was a serious crime. The internal borders between the ethnic groups were never discussed. We Bosnian Serbs were in a state against our will, against our history.

[Farina] You were never attacked because you defended your people, but because you conducted an aggressive campaign of conquest, with terrorism, torture, expulsion, and rape. Reportedly you said in Krajina: "Everything is permitted in order to prevent the return of fascism."

[Mladic] All that is Croatian propaganda. The Croats have just expelled 700,000 Serbs. They of all people know a great deal about ethnic cleansing! But I am the only one who is hunted, because I am a beast for you—your Bokassa, who eats the little children.

[Farina] Perhaps Bokassa was also only a victim of propaganda?

[Mladic] You have shown me this photo, and want to say by it that I am a criminal. I tell you: I am a top-level professional, a high-ranking officer—and the only general who waged a war against the whole world. There I achieved great military success. My staff and I did not burden ourselves with guilt, but with honor.

[Farina] What honor is it to fight against "waste"? This is what you called Croats, Slovenes, and Muslims.

[Mladic] That is what they are! They have always stuck their heads out only when the catastrophe came—and then they ran along with the winner.

[Farina] How is peace to be possible with so much hatred?

[Mladic] The problem is not what I am thinking. Real peace is only possible if all the foreign powers have withdrawn. The Gulf war was waged because of oil, and the Americans won it. Now it is simply the turn of the Balkans in these games of power. Several wars in Europe will follow.

[Farina] You are wanted as a war criminal...

[Mladic] I tell you what I already told UN commander Michael Rose: "Why are you, who have fought outside your state borders—for example, in the Gulf—the good guys? And why am I, who has defended his people, the bad guy?"

B-H: Commentary Says Serbs Preparing for New War

AU1303190896 Hanau NOVA BOSNA in Serbo-Croatian 13 Mar 96 p 2

[Commentary by Sejad Luckin: "The Raising of the Temperature"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Political circumstances in Bosnia-Herzegovina are becoming increasingly complicated and the raising of the temperature will hardly create an atmosphere needed for the realization of the tasks outstanding from the Bosnia-Herzegovina peace agreement. Tensions on one side automatically provoke, if nothing else, caution on the other side. When one of the Serbs who has recently left Sarajevo for Bratunac says that arms are already being collected there for a new war and reprisals against the "Balije" [derogatory name for Bosniaks], his words are a sufficient signal to the Bosniaks that they must not be unprepared. The U.S. leaders are persistently saying that their soldiers will not stay in Bosnia-Herzegovina a single day longer. The local leaders know that the IFOR's [Implementation Force] power in fact rests on the soldiers from the United States and NATO arms. The statement by Momcilo Krajisnik, one of the leaders of the (rebel) Bosnian Serbs, on a premature referendum indicates that they are in fact waiting for IFOR to leave and then continue with the old story. Their aim is to prevent the implementation of the Dayton agreement through political maneuvering, round off territories through population resettlement, and finally divide Bosnia-Herzegovina. If the international community does not frustrate these intentions over the next nine months and create conditions in which such intentions would not reemerge, then its representatives will not be able to leave Bosnia-Herzegovina with the conviction that they have accomplished their work. In that case the Dayton agreement would only be a pause between two wars.

B-H: Bosnian Serb Soldier on Srebrenica Massacre

BR0803153096 Paris LE FIGARO in French 8 Mar 96 p 26

[Article by Renaud Girard: "Bosnia—The Confession of Drazen, War Criminal"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Becej, Serbia—Both men were very nervous. On Saturday 2 March, Radoslav Kramenkovic, 29, and Drazen Erdemovic, 25, waited for nightfall before they drove me and an interpreter half an hour out of Becej, a town in Vojvodina 150 kilometers [km] from Belgrade and 70 km south of the Hungarian border. Our destination was a small chateau converted into a hotel in a lost part of the countryside. A former soldier in the Bosnian Serb Army, Drazen is a repentant war criminal.

Far from indiscreet ears, Drazen told us of the massacre that followed the surrender of Srebrenica on 11 July 1995 as if the scene had just taken place in the park around the hotel: "Our leader, Brano Gojkovic, ordered 10 Muslims to line up with their backs to us. We were lined up 10 meters [m] behind them. Brano's comrades, who had been with him in Nova Kasaba stadium, then opened fire. Everyone did the same. I aimed and fired. I had my Kalashnikov at the ready. In a few seconds they were all dead."

Two weeks ago Drazen went into hiding at the home of his regimental comrade Radoslav. However, the net is closing in on him. Since he decided to flee Yugoslavia and go to the Hague to testify to the International War Crimes Tribunal [IWCT] he has become a very dangerous man for the Serbian authorities. Drazen did a deal with an IWCT investigator: In return for his testimony he and his family would be resettled in a Western country. If he appeared at the bar as a witness and not as a defendant he would escape prosecution.

A Very Special Unit

Drazen has taken a very unusual route. With his sickly appearance and acne-ridden face, this stunted adolescent is in fact a Croat from Tuzla, the mostly Muslim city in Bosnia controlled by Sarajevo. When the war reached Tuzla on 15 May 1992, Drazen became a smuggler. He helped the town's Serbs get through the front line and escape to Pale-controlled territory. He married a girl from Tuzla born out of a mixed Serbo-Croat marriage.

In November 1993 the police arrested him as he was preparing to "evacuate" 76 Serbs. He was sent to the prison for Croats in Tuzla. After two weeks, the prison director, a family friend, saw to his release. He took the opportunity then to go to the "Serbian Republic" where he immediately enlisted in General Mladic's army.

In January 1995 Drazen was assigned to a special unit, the "10th Diversion Commando." That was where he met Radoslav, a Serbian citizen, a former lieutenant in the Federal Army, who had signed up again for service in the Bosnian Serb Army. The 80-man commando group had the mission of "eliminating troublesome people" and "sabotaging sensitive targets behind enemy lines."

Under the command of Lieutenant Milorad Pelemis the unit was placed under the direct authority of Colonel Pero Salapura, one of the heads of military security. Pelemis was a battle-hardened soldier who had seen action in the most bloody ethnic cleansing operations of 1992. A lover of fast cars and the good life in Belgrade hotels, Pelemis had the annoying habit of keeping for himself the bonuses paid in marks to the commando unit each time they scored a success.

From the summer onward relations between Pelemis and his subordinates, Radoslav and Drazen, deteriorated. On the night of 22 July 1995, an argument turned into a gunfight and both men were seriously wounded by a henchman working for their leader. Six months later, on 12 February, Pelemis kicked Drazen out of his home in Bijelina. That was the final straw.

Drazen decided to flee and testify to the IWCT. That would be his revenge and a way of escaping the rage of his former commander. On 15 February, he arrived in Becej at the door of his friend Radoslav.

The two friends learned that the international community had decided not to let the war criminals go unpunished. An unmistakable sign was when, on 20 January and with the blessing of Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, the Americans managed to send a team of investigators to the killing fields of Bosnia where they exhumed the bodies of thousands of Muslims who had been shot after General Mladic had taken the enclave of Srebrenica.

On 20 July Drazen had indeed participated is the mass execution of Muslims taken prisoner when the enclave was captured. In the chateau-hotel in Vojvodina he confessed for three hours before, he hopes, confessing again in the Hague.

From 14 to 16 July, Drazen participated in the last operations for the conquest of Srebrenica: "There was no resistance. Before we entered the town we were ordered to spare all the men who surrendered without fighting."

On 17 July, Drazen went back to Trebinje, a Serbian town near Dubrovnik, to attend a funeral. He returned to barracks in Vlasenica (Eastern Bosnia) on the evening of 19 July where his comrades told him about the "skirmishes" they had had "in the forest" with the Muslims who were trying to reach the zones controlled by Sarajevo. After the fall of Srebrenica the Bosnian-Serb Army undertook a massive manhunt to kill the Muslims who, distrustful, had preferred to flee rather than surrender.

"Shut Up and Fire"

Drazen also learned that some of his comrades had taken part in the mass execution of the fugitives who, when they had been caught had been assembled in the stadium of Nova Kasaba, a small town 30 km to the west of Srebrenica.

On the morning of 20 July Drazen and seven of his comrades of the 10th commando unit were called to Pelemis' office. He ordered them to go directly to Zvornik where they would report to the military police: "We arrived in our half-track at 1000 and a lieutenant colonel was waiting for us. Brano spoke to him briefly in private."

Brano Gojkovic, an experienced ethnic cleanser and a sidekick of Pelemis had been appointed as head of the small group for the day. Drazen continued: "The lieutenant colonel ordered us to follow his car. After a 20-minute drive, just before the village of Pilice, he forked left and took an earth road. He stopped after 500m in front a state farm. I still did not know why we were there."

"We got out of our half-track and the lieutenant colonel said simply: 'This is where the buses will arrive!' I understood immediately. In addition to our eight Kalashnikovs there was a Soviet M84 machine gun in the half-track and a load of ammunition. We went for a smoke behind a hangar."

A quarter of an hour later, the first bus arrived. "On board there were about 60 men, all in civilian dress. Some of them were very young, 17 or 18 years old. The oldest were in their 50's. Two armed policemen were guarding them."

Brano gave his orders. Five of the soldiers were to go into the field to wait for the prisoners. He would take the other two and find the "Turks" (a pejorative term for the Muslims). The policemen would stay in the buses and keep an eye on the others.

"I saw the Muslims approaching in single file. They did not say a word. Brano was constantly pushing them on, insulting them. 'Fucking Turks! Nasir stitched you up! You're going to pay for him!'" Nasir Oric had been the renowned Muslim commander of Srebrenica.

The first 10 prisoners were shot. "When the men of the second group arrived to pick up the bodies they begged us: 'Don't kill us! Our families are in Austria and they will send you money!'"

Drazen told how one of his comrades called out to the Muslims: "Anyone who has marks will be saved! Get your money out!" But Brano had intervened: "Save your breath, we took all their things in Zvornik!" Drazen continued: "The Muslims confirmed that the police had taken all their possessions. We started to fire again."

Tens and tens of people were massacred. Drazen spoke with little apparent emotion as if he were simply recounting military maneuvers. I insisted that he describe the attitude of the condemned men: "What can I tell you? Most of them begged us not to kill them or offered us money. Some of them insulted us. Others chanted ''Allah allahu Akbar.'"

And how did he feel? Was he not aware of the monstrosity he was involved in? "Yes. Once I murmured to a comrade, another Croat like me, 'God knows how all this is going to come back to us one day!' and he replied 'Shut up and fire, otherwise you know full well that it will be our turn to be killed. We are only Croats.'"

Drazen found a poor excuse: "I tried to kill as few people as possible. I tried not to fire on the youngest ones. All in all I don't think that I personally could have killed more than about 70 prisoners."

Drazen did not take part in the massacre of the second busload: "A Muslim of about 50 came up to me and explained that he had helped 20 or so Serbs escape from Srebrenica. So that I could check his story he gave me a list of names and telephone numbers in Serbia. He had been a smuggler just like me! We talked for half an hour."

That was when Drazen learned where these condemned men had come from. They were men who had chosen not to flee but to stay with their families, and they had taken refuge in the headquarters of the Netherlands Blue Helmets. However, these "brilliant" soldiers had surrendered without firing a shot, abandoning to their fate the unfortunate people who had been naive enough to believe in the honor of the United Nations. The women and children were chased out toward Tuzla and the men were ferried by bus to Zvornik. The massacre in Pilice was therefore a massacre of the people who had surrendered to the Serbian Republic without putting up a fight.

Drazen did not obtain permission to save the life of the man he was protecting. A soldier came for him: "Sorry, the chief does not want to leave a single surviving witness behind!"

700 Rounds

Drazen told how the Serbs had lost their cool when the third busload of Muslims arrived: "Brano and his mates were getting increasingly drunk on brandy. They were crazed. They hit the Muslims with iron bars. When theyhad knocked one down they forced the others to carry him to the execution area. To speed things up, Brano decided to use the machine gun. But he was not a professional. The bursts of gunfire wounded instead of killing. The wounded men begged us to finish them off. Stanko Sovanovic, one of Brano's mates, shot each of them in the head. Afterwards he boasted he had used up 700 rounds."

Drazen thinks that that day his group dealt with "between 15 and 20 busloads." "It was a rotation of the same five buses between there and Zvornik. The Serbian drivers were terrified, but Brano forced them to kill at least one Muslim each. That way they would not be tempted to testify one day." How many victims were there in total? "I didn't keep count, but I would say about 1,200."

By 1530 it was all over. "The lieutenant colonel told us that a bulldozer would come and bury the bodies. Then he asked us to take care of the other 500 Muslims imprisoned in Pilice community hall. But we had had enough. We refused and we told him that would never do that kind of work again."

Insistence of Washington

However, this revolt late in the day did not stop the process. "The lieutenant colonel found volunteers in another unit from Bratunac. I know because we had a last drink opposite the community hall. Guys standing around the building ended up throwing grenades inside. There were two bodies outside, probably Muslims who had tried to escape. We started back to barracks. In the half-track the men got drunk on beer. They sang at the top of their voices. I just kept quiet..."

It was midnight and Drazen's story was over. There was not a sound in the deserted chateau-hotel. We arranged to meet up again at 0830 the next morning. I loaned my car to Drazen so that he could leave with Radoslav.

In the morning Drazen and Radoslav were late. What had happened? Our impatience turned to concern. With the interpreter's help we managed to hitch back to Becej and went to Radoslav's place, a modest little house at 50 Rade Stanisica street. We learned that a squad of policemen from Belgrade had turned up at 0300 in the morning. The house had been searched from top to bottom and the phone line cut. The two men had been taken away, but the police refused to say by whom and to where.

Will the tribunal in the Hague never get to hear Drazen's testimony? In Washington the secretary of state himself was informed of the problem: The United States, sponsors of the Dayton agreement, has always insisted on the need to try the war criminals. Serbia must now make a choice. Either it lets Drazen go to the Hague in accordance with its agreement to cooperate with the IWCT, or it keeps its secrets and jeopardizes its reintegration in the international community.

B-H: Article Says Serbs Training 'Terrorists'

96BA0147A Sarajevo LJILJAN in Serbo-Croatian 24-31 Jan 96 p 4

[Article by Fahrudin Salkic: "The Serbs Are Already Preparing Special Forces for a Terrorist War Against the Bosnia-Herzegovina State"]

[FBIS Translated Text] *Pale and Belgrade are working in coordination on forming specialized terrorist groups with clearly specified assignments—sowing terror and violence in Bosnia-Herzegovina and abroad in order to undermine the credibility of the Bosnia-Herzegovina state. Former special forces of the "Serbian Ministry of Internal Affairs" [MUP], the VJ [Army of Yugoslavia], and the VRS [Army of the Republic of Srpska] will now be appearing as businessmen, artists.... The enemy leadership will blame "Bosnian Islamic fundamentalism" for most of the actions, fostering the Europeans' chronic fear of Islamic terrorism. Possible targets: Bosnia-Herzegovina embassies, individuals in the political leadership, but also movie theaters, theaters, trolley cars....*

Specialized sabotage-terrorist groups, under the direct command of the narrowest circle of people around Radovan Karadzic, will be formed from selected members of the former MUP Special Units and certain units for special purposes of the Army of the so-called Republic of Srpska. The purpose of these groups has been precisely defined. They will be used exclusively for intimidating the population in order to prevent the return of refugees and the forced emigration of citizens of Serbian nationality from territories that will be returned to the federation. Naturally, this is also suitable for sowing fear, terror, and violence on the free territories of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and then abroad as well. Thorough training of the members of those units is taking place at this moment in the occupied parts of Sarajevo.

Reliance Upon Belgrade

In the shadow of the search for possibilities for implementing the Dayton agreements, the civilian and military (intelligence) leadership circles in Pale and Belgrade are intensively thinking about possible methods and means for achieving the goals that were not realized in the war. In connection with this, the Serbian political leadership issued specific assignments to General Zdravko Tolimir, assistant commander of the General Staff of the VRS, and to war criminal Mico Stanisic, the Republic of Srpska's minister of internal affairs, to develop optimal methods for continuing the struggle in case the autonomy of the so-called Republic of Srpska could not be achieved through international pressures and political negotiations. Military and civilian intelligence officers have already drafted tentative plans. In consultations in which Mico Stanisic, Milenko Karisik, the commander of all of the special units of the Republic of Srpska MUP, Goran Saric, commander of the special police brigade, and the commanders of certain VRS special purpose units played a significant role, it was decided that the formation of subversive action teams was one of the priority tasks for the upcoming period.

Karadzic is justifiably counting on Belgrade's assistance, and on the members of the former Chetnik extremist emigres, both financially, as potential operational and financial backers, and in terms of personnel and training. The announced arrival of Nikola Kavaja (a skyjacker and unsuccessful organizer of an assassination attempt against Josip Broz) in Pale is associated with the latter. Karadzic expects that he will be able to rely completely upon members of the special unit of the former Federal SUP [Secretariat for Internal Affairs], who gained professional recognition through action against the former extremist emigres. In altered circumstances, the former "hunters" will work together with the "prey." Since the identity of most of the highly trained members of those units, by the nature of things, has been kept secret, in a very short period of time the former special forces, operatives, and liquidators, now under the cover of commercial, cultural, and humanitarian workers (or refugees or political emigres and asylum seekers) and tourists, will appear in the countries of Western Europe, with clearly specified assignments and targets for terrorist actions. Of course, the perpetrators of war crimes on the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina are also very promising personnel; they will be (or are) fleeing from judicial prosecution, and will seek refuge in the Chetnik emigres' active organizations.

Relying on the tolerant attitude of the international community toward all the forms of organized Serbian state terrorism manifested to date, and appreciating and recognizing their own terrorist nature, as well as the wealth of experiences to date, the intelligence services of the armies of the FRY [Federal Republic of Yugoslavia] and RS have assessed that during the upcoming period it will be most realistic to resort to terrorism, at home and abroad, because that ensures the effectiveness of action and wide possibilities for camouflaging the perpetrators and advertising the target. Terrorism per se has imposed itself as the ideal solution. Above all, it is usual that after wars, the intelligence services of the warring sides (or countries) begin to use terrorists and their methods to achieve the goals that were not realized during the war. It is thus realistically possible to portray any terrorist action that is not directly aimed against the inhabitants of Bosnia-Herzegovina as an action by "Bosnian Islamic fundamentalists." It is possible that actions will be directed against a very broad range of targets, from Bosnia-Herzegovina diplomatic and consular representatives, through refugee centers and gathering places for our citizens, to cultural and athletic centers, theaters, and movie theaters. All these actions would have in common the discrediting of Bosnia-Herzegovina and its leadership, the diplomatic corps, and citizens located abroad, and the creation of a feeling of insecurity among citizens within Bosnia-Herzegovina itself.

Terrorism is not a new phenomenon. It can be said that terror is as old as intelligence services. In recent years the world has seen growth in terrorist activities on the international level, in terms of both goals and actions, and in terms of groups and organizations carrying out those actions, so that the term "international terrorism" has been introduced among the people who deal with those problems of terrorism. In this kind of environment, association with international criminal and terrorist organizations has also been planned, for the sake of possible joint action.

Political Terrorism

In their plans for future actions, Karadzic and his associates are relying on several established and recorded forms of terrorism in the world today—especially on so-called criminal terrorism, as the most basic manifestation. The perpetrators of acts in this field are mostly people with a criminal past, who owe penance in exchange for "forgiveness of their sins." People like that will be used primarily in kidnappings, assassinations, and the planting of bombs in self-service shops, commercial firms, and movie theaters, for the purpose of intimidation or extortion (extracting financial gain, which will be used, in turn, to finance subsequent actions). This form of the use of terror has also played a role during the war to date, from the very beginning (from the kidnapping of President Izetbegovic at the Sarajevo airport in May 1992, through the kidnapping and blackmail of members of the UN Protection Force and murders, to the kidnapping of French pilots and Bosnia-Herzegovina citizens in Ilidza), and has proven to be very effective, so its continued use should be expected.

Another planned manifestation is so-called political terrorism, for which an ideological and political basis is needed, and which, in terms of the type of action, can have a propaganda nature, the achievement of a precisely determined and narrow goal, or the direct destruction of its ideological and political enemy. Usually these goals are mutually interwoven to the extent that it is impossible to distinguish clearly the goal of a given terrorist action. It is to be expected that these groups will also attempt actions to liberate and release accused and possibly arrested war criminals from Bosnia-Herzegovina.

It is an irrefutable fact that someone is behind all terrorist organizations in the world. In that context, it is to be expected that the Serbian terrorists will also be backed by someone who is capable of financing them and "covering" them by means of propaganda. Since the targets are precisely defined, it is very likely that this will be the intelligence service of the FRY and the suspected KOS [military counterintelligence service]. The counterintelligence and antiterrorist forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina will, therefore, have a far more complex task than OZNA [Department for the Security of the People] and UDBA [State Security Administration] after World War II. The enemy is virtually the same, but stronger and more dangerous with 50 years of experience from the period of the emigres and this war.

[Box, p 4]

Organizers, Operatives, and Liquidators

It is reliably known that the former Federal SUP, the KOS, and the JNA [Yugoslav People's Army] intelligence service, in the struggle against extremist emigres after the end of World War II, organized complicated networks of intelligence officers and liquidators, whose exclusive assignment was to uncover and eliminate prominent members of such groups and organizations. One of the liquidators has also shown his face in the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. He is Zeljko "Arkan" Raznjatovic. During the war in the former Yugoslavia, Arkan, with the help and support of former employers and associates, organized paramilitary Chetnik units intended for the mass liquidation of civilians in Croatia, and especially in Bosnia-Herzegovina. It is to be expected that Arkan's cronies will continue this dirty job in the countries of Western Europe, deviating from their current goals and background.

One of the most prominent organizers of terrorist actions and liquidations during the prewar period in the former Yugoslavia was Radmilo Bogdanovic (former Serbian minister of internal affairs, and current vice president of the Council of Republics in the FRY Assembly). He was also prominent in the direct preparations for the aggression against Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the organization, training, and arming of the Serbian Volunteer Guards and White Eagles paramilitary units, and other criminals, and his prewar employees. Mihalj Kertes also made a vile contribution to all of this. His task was to take care of recruiting personnel, and the training, equipping, and operational coverage of groups to carry out terrorist actions abroad.

B-H: NDZ Founder Aims for Political Power via Mostar

AU0803151696 Sarajevo OSLOBODJENJE (Bosnian) in Serbo-Croatian 2 Mar 96 p 9

[Article by Sejad Luckin: "Back to Power Over Western Mostar"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The higher court in Mostar, in its western part, has registered a political party under the name of National Democratic Community [NDZ], the founder of which is Fikret Abdic. The registration in the Register of Companies has been carried out in line with the prewar Law on Registration of Political Parties of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Stjepan Mikulic, presiding judge of the Higher Court in Mostar, said yesterday for OSLOBODJENJE.

Abdic's National Democratic Community has chosen Mostar for the seat of the party, and Mikulic says that there were no legal obstacles for its registration. The court has received the list of 50 founders, which includes Fikret Abdic, the party statute and all other necessary documents. The fact that Mostar is the party headquarters is not a point of dispute, because in Mikulic's interpretation, the law leaves the founders with the right to make a choice of the place of their political activity.

Law and Crimes

Meanwhile, Dr. Kasim Trnka, acting ambassador of Bosnia-Herzegovina to Croatia, and one of the creators of the prewar law, has different opinions about that. He claims that no one against whom legal proceedings have been instigated can found a political party, nor can such a person participate in the elections. Dr. Trnka reproaches the Mostar Higher Court for neglecting the provisions of the Dayton agreement, according to which, he says, the registration of the parties for the approaching elections is carried out in the Contemporary Electoral Commission, headed by the ambassador Robert Frovik.

Judge Mikulic responds to Trnka's remarks with a question: "And where does the law say so?" There was no provision on criminal responsibility, and the founding of the National Democratic Community is not legally disputable for him.

Judge Mikulic did not want to talk about the political implications of this legal act that made the return of Fikret Abdic to the Bosnia-Herzegovina political stage possible. In his opinion, it is a job for a politician, not a court.

And while Mikulic and Dr. Trnka have different interpretations of the registration of the National Democratic Community, in Sarajevo, in the circles of the Republican and Federal Government, the information on the appearance of this political party was received with a lot of surprise. M.S. Hilmo Pasic, republican minister of justice and administration, has not heard of that at all. In the first telephone conversation with the undersigned journalist, he has said that he would first check the information, and only then comment on it. Only, he pointed out, one must make a difference between actual registration and participation in the elections.

Ministers Have Never Heard of That

M.S. Pasic checked the information with his colleague, also Minister of Justice Mato Tadic. There was not much more new even after their conversation. They came to the conclusion that Tadic should check everything in Mostar, where he travels over the weekend. In the second telephone conversation M.S. Pasic stated that the judicature and the judicial system were within the jurisdiction of the Federation, and that one should look for an answer there. Meanwhile, a special law on the registration of political parties has not yet been adopted in the Federation, so the prewar law is valid also for that part of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

As far as concerns possible changes in the registration procedure for political parties and the election procedure, based upon the Dayton agreement, M.S. Pasic says that talks are only now being held about that in the Contemporary Electoral Commission, and that the idea is that this commission be entrusted with that whole job. Because, in Banja Luka alone, there are allegedly 26 parties and who knows how they have been registered, Pasic quotes an example. All in all, he thinks that it is a complex problem that has to be closely considered.

This rather extensive interpretation of legal provisions largely reflects the confusion itself that rules the political life of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Thanks to this confusion it is possible for a person, in this case Fikret Abdic, officially labeled by the state authorities as a war criminal, to be resurrected into political life and even to announce his campaign to win power. For the secretary of Abdic's party, a certain Ibrahim Djedovic, has done so, in saying on Radio Free Europe that their goal is to have Abdic as a candidate in the elections, and before that to be involved in all the agreements on the future of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Twenty thousand signatures should give authority to Abdic and his National Democratic Community, and those signatures would also enable him to join the election race.

The judge of the Mostar Higher Court, Stjepan Mikulic, knows nothing about those 20,000 signatures, nor he has seen that list. For him, 50 sufficed. Dr. Kasim Trnka, asked whether those signatures were collected in the Kuplensko refugee camp in Croatia, where there is still a number of Abdic's followers, answers that it is impossible. At the moment, there are, according to the UNHCR [UN High Commissioner for Refugees], 6,600 persons and most of them are children. So, they are under age and their signatures are not valid. Apart from that, some 19,000 persons have returned to Velika Kladusa, and even with them it would be difficult to obtain the signatures of 20,000 major citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Prisoner-Politician

Recognition of the citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina, 20,000 of them, whose signatures made the political resurrection of Fikret Abdic possible, could be a valid signal of his downright intentions. However, regarding the unbending attitude of the state authorities in Sarajevo toward Abdic, for whom he is a war criminal and a traitor, his return, by the diversion over western Mostar, could result in a tightening up between the partners in the Federation, primarily between the SDA [Party of Democratic Action] and HDZ [Croatian Democratic Community].

It is superfluous to talk about Abdic's role in the aggression on Bosnia-Herzegovina. It suffices to go to the Bihac region and ask the fighters of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army what they think about him. Having made it possible for him to find shelter on its territory, the Republic of Croatia has made a move that influences relations with the neighboring Bosnia-Herzegovina very much. The comfort to Sarajevo is not even the fact that Abdic is, allegedly, under temporary arrest. Moreover, Croatia's authorities have never answered the official request of the state of Bosnia-Herzegovina for the extradition of Fikret Abdic.

The ambassador of Bosnia-Herzegovina to Croatia, Dr. Kasim Trnka, says that Abdic is in Opatija. His life is not at all bad, and one could not even say that he has the status of a person under temporary arrest. Dr. Trnka thinks that it is more like some kind of intensified control over him.

There have not been speculations in Sarajevo that, by refusing to extradite Abdic, Zagreb in fact wants to maintain control over a strong trump card, by which it can influence political relations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, primarily within the Bosniak nation. This conviction is based upon Abdic's undoubtful authority, and even popularity among his followers in the Cazin Krajina. Also, the fact that he cannot be reconciled to the policy of Alija Izetbegovic is not without significance. Abdic has, after all, stood up against the state of Bosnia-Herzegovina with arms, having joined Karadzic's and Martic's armies.

With such a past, Sarajevo can hardly accept him as a partner, nor as a political opponent. Dr. Kasim Trnka thinks that the amnesty law cannot be applied to Abdic. He has been marked as a criminal and to do so someone would have to remove that label from him.

However, Dr. Trnka does not dispute the possibility of his followers' making a political association and joining the election race. Of course, with the condition that they respect certain legal provisions. "They can, but Abdic cannot," Dr. Trnka is categorical.

However, in the Register of the Mostar Higher Court, in the part of town under the control of the HVO [Croatian Defense Council], among the founders of the National Democratic Community there is the name of Fikret Abdic. And that is what could start the avalanche of accusations between the partners in the Federation. The presiding judge, Stjepan Mikulic, covers himself with legal argumentation. Grist to his independence is also the statement of Borisa Colak, deputy minister of justice in the Government of Herzeg-Bosnia, that he knows nothing about the founding and registration of that party. The lack of information of the Federal minister Mato Tadic, who even 14 days after the registration of Abdic's party knew nothing about it, is one more proof of his independence.

However, will Sarajevo and the SDA accept such an argument. It is not very likely that would happen, because the war was raging over Bosnia-Herzegovina and all its regions for four years, and regardless of who controlled them or who controls them now, structures have been built in which the judiciary could praise itself with anything but actual independence. In Herzeg-Bosnia, where Judge Stjepan Mikulic's office is, many parties have been denied permission to work, and all of a sudden the law is so liberal that there is place even for Abdic.

Fikret Abdic is obviously trying to get back to Bosnia-Herzegovina through the back door. Many will say that this door is being opened from Zagreb and over western Mostar. However, the question is, whether they will slam the door on him on the other side, or allow him to get back. The storm lies ahead.

B-H: Article Views Draft Law on Bosnian Federation Army

96BA0134A Ljubljana OSLOBODJENJE in Serbo-Croatian 4-11 Jan 96 p 8

[Article by Ibrahim Polimac: "Religion Forward, Politics Stop!"]

[FBIS Translated Text] *The Federation Army will be formed by the transformation of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army and the HVO [Croatian Defense Council]; civilian service on the basis of religious and moral views is also possible; ban on political organization; 12 months of military service.*

The deputies and representatives of the Constitutional Assembly, at their last meeting, accepted the draft defense law. Feeling that the solutions offered could serve as a good basis, they charged the government with preparing a proposal, taking into account the suggestions heard in the assembly—the usual formulation of the conclusion with respect to legislative activity and when a "hot potato" has to be passed to someone else—because positions that remained uncoordinated were heard from the assembly podium.

The government is thus left with trying to reconcile the opinions and arguments which, to start with, were associated with the final paragraphs of Articles 49 and 96 of the draft law, and all of Article 222. The first two provide for the possibility of choosing "the part of the Federation Army" in which a military conscript will serve in the reserves, or a recruit will perform his period of military service. Furthermore, it is specified that the Defense Ministry's department in the municipality "is obligated to permit this" (Article 49), and "will allow him to do so" (Article 96). Probably because of a lack of time, the draft was distributed on the same day that it was discussed, and the critics missed the formulation in the third paragraph of Article 53, along the same lines as these two.

The only alternative that is contained in the draft itself applies to Article 222. According to one version, during the transitional period "defense affairs, as well as the command and control of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army and the HVO, will be conducted by the competent government bodies on the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina that exist on the day when this law goes into effect, in accordance with valid regulations." The second version provides that "the function of commander in chief of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army will be performed by the president of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Presidency, and the function of commander in chief of the HVO will be performed by the president or vice president of the Federation (who is from the ranks of the Croatian people)," naturally until the defense system and the Federation Army are organized in accordance with the law's provisions.

Armed Forces

According to the draft, in the sphere of defense the Federation president, with the consent of the vice president, performs the duty of commander in chief of the Federation's armed forces. In order to perform staff work at the Defense Ministry, a Joint Command of the Federation Army is being established, to be headed by a commander and deputy commander who are not from the same constituency. The organization of the Army is to be determined by the commander in chief at the proposal of the defense minister.

The Armed Forces consist of the Federation Army, and in wartime, also of police, which are put under the Army's command.

The Federation Army consists of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army and HVO units through the corps and corps district level, and consists of both the peacetime and wartime force compositions. The peacetime composition includes individuals serving in the Army, soldiers performing their period of military service, and the professional composition. The wartime composition also includes units which are formed on the basis of territorial and production principles, in accordance with regulations adopted by the commander in chief.

According to the provisions, the Federation Army will have the three usual branches of service: the ground forces, navy, and air force and air defense. The branches will consist of 11 services and 15 specialties.

Article 41 "prohibits any political activity, the formation of parties, political gatherings, and political events in the Federation Army." The Bosnian and Croatian languages and the Latin alphabet of the ijekavian dialect are in official use.

Recruitment Obligations

The overall size and numerical composition of the Army, as well as the date that will be celebrated as the date of its creation, will be determined by a regulation from the commander in chief. The members will wear the prescribed clothing, which will bear the seal of the Federation and military rank insignia that will be standardized for the Federation Army. The Army's flag will be prescribed by a separate law.

Religious activities can be organized and conducted in the Army on the basis of the voluntary expression and practice of religious feelings. The draft provides that "within a period of three months from the day when this law is fully in effect, the Defense Ministry, in cooperation with religious communities, will prescribe the provisional organization and method of operation of religious activities in the Federation Army."

The military obligation consists of the "obligation of recruitment, the obligation to serve a period of military service, and the obligation to serve in the reserves." Women are not subject to recruitment or to serve a period of military service, but can voluntarily join the Federation Army in wartime. The period of military service is 12 months, it is served in the Army, and the obligation to participate in the reserves can be fulfilled in the Army or the police. Students who are being educated on a year-by-year basis are sent for military service after the conclusion of their studies, and at the latest by the end of the year in which they reach age 27.

Conscientious Objection

A special section of the draft is entitled "Conscientious Objection." Conscientious objection is allowed for those who are not prepared to participate in carrying out military duties because of their religious or moral views. It is considered by a special Commission for Civilian Service, which is appointed by the Ministry of Justice. In the event of a favorable decision, the conscript is sent to "civilian service," which is performed, as a rule, in the Federation Army and in duties "without carrying and using weapons," and where "no violence whatsoever is used against other people." Individuals who have performed civilian service are permanently prohibited from being issued permits to purchase and carry weapons. Nevertheless, the period of military service without carrying and using weapons lasts for 24 months! Finally, the provisions on civilian service, according to Article 221 of the draft, "will not be applicable in wartime."

Finally, the transitional and final provisions say that "the Federation Army will be formed in accordance with this law through the transformation of the commands, staffs, units, and institutions of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army and the HVO which are located on Federation territory on the day that this law goes into effect."

The law "becomes fully valid on the day of its publication in SLUZBENE NOVINE FEDERACIJE BIH." Before that, naturally, it will be necessary to coordinate the proposal and any amendments, and to adopt it in the Constitutional Assembly.

B-H: Islamic Leader Invites Bosniaks To Celebrate Ramadan

96BA0140A Sarajevo DNEVNI AVAZ in Serbo-Croatian 20 Jan 96 p 5

[Interview with Ismet effendi Spahic, deputy reisu-l-uleme, by Hilmo Mujic; place and date not given: "A Month of Joy and Nobility"]

[FBIS Translated Text] *After four years of war, we approach this Ramadan in a Bosnia-Herzegovina that is, to some extent, peaceful. Ramadan is a month of joy, nobility, and repentance, and we talked about this with hafiz Ismet effendi Spahic, deputy reisu-l-uleme of the Islamic Community in the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina.*

"*Bismillahi-r-Rahmani-r-Rahim*: With joy, we look forward to Ramadan and celebrate its arrival, without artillery shells and in peace," says hafiz Spahic, and he continues: "This joy is clouded by the truth that many Bosniaks are refugees far from their homes. Nevertheless, every believer is glad to receive this most cherished guest."

Every Bosniak should at least crack open the door to Ramadan, says effendi Spahic. Especially those who have closed the door to it for years. Even the one who cannot fast throughout Ramadan should set aside at least a few days for fasting and accept Ramadan as a required divine rite (*farz*). In that way, he proves that he is a believer.

Clouded Joy

During Ramadan, people become nobler. That is why it is no accident that, in addition to fasting during Ramadan, there are also other obligations which are also *farz*: for instance, giving *zekat* [alms] and *vitra* [alms during Ramadan]. This can be done even when it is not Ramadan, but this giving is far more fruitful during that time.

"The joy of Ramadan is clouded by the fact that many families are receiving the cherished guest (*musafir*) without their nearest and dearest. Without their sons and husbands. In addition to warm words, they need to be afforded at least one fine *iftar* [Ramadan supper at sundown], and to know that this is the fruit of their nearest and dearest," effendi Spahic says.

[Mujic] How will the *teravija* be celebrated this Ramadan?

[Spahic] "It is peacetime, so this year we return again to praying the *teravija* with 20 *rekata*. During wartime, because of the constant danger of shelling, we prayed with only eight *rekata* in the mosques, and the believers prayed the rest at home," effendi Spahic explained.

[Mujic] Many shrines have been destroyed. How and where are people to pray?

[Spahic] More than 1,000 mosques have been destroyed during this aggression. However, I have a habit of saying that hundreds of thousands of them have been built in our hearts. People find a way, so that by adapting an abandoned store, supermarket, or factory building, they devise minor shrines (*mecet*). I recommend that this be done until we are able to build mosques and mecet-shrines.

Concealment Is a Good Deed (*Sevap*)

[Mujic] Ramadan order and custom (*adet*)?

[Spahic] "The spirit of Ramadan should be created in the home, and even if fasting is not done, habits can be acquired through that atmosphere of *iftar*. I am aware that everyone cannot fast, but that should not be displayed publicly. People should not walk the streets or alleys with a cigarette in their mouth.

"Even that concealment is *sevap*. It is a great thing when a man says that he will not do something public in the name of God.

"This is a time for us to encourage and urge one another," effendi Spahic believes. "We need every Bosniak. We need to pray to God for one another, to help us, to make us stand straight. I call upon all of our cherished Bosniaks to accept Ramadan as God's *farz*. To greet it and celebrate it in joy. To fast. And to bid it farewell with a greeting. May god give them mercy and forgiveness and may the next Ramadan find us in still better contentment (*rahatluk*)," Ismet effendi Spahic, deputy reisu-l-uleme of the Islamic Community of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, said for readers of DNEVNI AVAZ in connection with the arrival of Ramadan.

Croatia: Tudjman Chairs Discussion of Dayton Accord

LD1303174196 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Defense and National Security Council held a session today under the chairmanship of Croatian President Franjo Tudjman. The president informed the council that, given Croatia's transition to a peacetime setup and period, he has decided to carry out changes in the armed forces.

With regard to problems with the establishment of the federation and its relations with the Republic of Croatia, it was concluded that Croatia will persevere in lending support to the implementation of the Washington and Dayton agreements, and that obstacles are being removed at joint meetings.

The Defense and National Security Council supports the government's decision to lease out part of the free zone in the port of Ploce [to Bosnia], by which cooperation between the Republic of Croatia and the Federation will be improved.

Croatia: FRY's Bar Accord Linked to Prevlaka Dispute

AU1203171996 Split SLOBODNA DALMACIJA in Serbo-Croatian 12 Mar 96 p 3

[Commentary by Luko Brailo: "FRY Demilitarizing Boka Kotorska?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A part of the port of Bar will soon be used for military purposes as well, which means that the Yugoslav Navy, instead of its occasional use so far, will be permanently present in this Montenegrin port. This agreement is the result of a meeting held recently between the representatives of the Montenegrin Government and the port of Bar and Federal Defense Minister Pavle Bulatovic. According to this agreement, on which the local state-run radio station reported only briefly, the Yugoslav Navy will put its vessels at the disposal of the port of Bar for commercial use, while in return an accord has been reached on the navy's fleet using a stretch of the operative coast around the Bar port.

Unlike similar transactions between the Montenegrin authorities and the Yugoslav Navy, which have been considerably covered by the media, this latest agreement on what is effectively further militarization of that part of the Montenegrin coast has received casual treatment in the media. From this fact some independent Montenegrin newspapers conclude that the port's use for military purposes falls within the preparations for (today's) visit of Federal Foreign Minister Milan Milutinovic to Zagreb. According to such assessments, at the same time this is a sign of the inevitable acceptance of proposals on the demilitarization of Prevlaka's hinterland, on which, as is known, the Republic of Croatia particularly insists.

To the independent Montenegrin analysts the agreement on using the Bar port for military purposes reached on the eve of Milutinovic's departure to Zagreb is an expression of support for the demilitarization of the disputed area, that is, the withdrawal of a considerable amount of military capacity from the regions of Boka Kotorska closer to Prevlaka. In other words, the areas around Herceg-Novi and Kumbor, where a considerable part of the Yugoslav Navy's fleet is currently located, are supposed to be cleared of military capacity and this, according to the logic of reciprocal demilitarization on both sides of the border, is supposed to be moved south into the territorial waters of Tivat, where Belgrade already has sovereignty over the local overhaul plant Sava Kovacevic and many other accompanying facilities. However, as this area is obviously insufficient, agreement has been reached on the permanent use of part of the Bar port for military needs.

In this regard, it should be pointed out that the news on this agreement has been announced only three days after the People's Party of Montenegro, led by Novak Kilibarda, demanded that a debate be held in the Montenegrin Assembly on measures to be taken in the future to settle the problem of Prevlaka. Leader of the People's Party Kilibarda openly wondered at the news conference what sort of demilitarization the whole issue was about and what it all meant. "Does that mean that the ruling Democratic Party of Socialists led by Momir Bulatovic accepts the demilitarization of Prevlaka as proposed by Tudjman? These are the questions that must be discussed in the Assembly and I believe our proposal will be supported by other opposition parties as well," Kilibarda said.

Croatia: Opposition Parties Attack Antipress Law

AU1303185696 Paris AFP in English 1835 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Zagreb, March 12 (AFP)—Croatian opposition parties Wednesday [13 March] assailed a bill reintroducing press curbs last used when the communists were in power.

Under the bill, debated in parliament Wednesday, journalists found guilty of defaming the president, prime minister or other senior government officials or of revealing civil or military state secrets will be jailed for up to one year.

"This bill will criple press freedom," Bozo Kovacevic of the centre-left Social Liberal Party told parliament.

The bill, which will be voted on Friday, is the idea of Vladimir Seks, a lawyer belonging to the rightwing ruling Croatian Democratic Union party of President Franjo Tudjman.

"Only a person can be defamed, not a post," Antun Vujic, a deputy of the left-wing Croatian Socialist Action Party, said in the debate carried live by state-run television.

Kovacevic said it was vital that the bill define what was meant by state secrets.

"If journalists write about people using their positions to further their personal ends, are they seen as revealing a state secret?" he asked.

"We should dissuade officials from revealing state secrets but not punish the media which publishes them," he said.

The law protecting state officials from attack by the press, which last existed under the penal code of the former Yugoslavia, was removed from the Croatian penal code when Croatia declared independence from Belgrade in 1991 and ousted the communist government.

Croatia: Unions Continue General Strike Preparations

AU1403141496 Paris AFP in English 1403 GMT 14 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Zagreb, March 14 (AFP)—Croatia's main trade unions are continuing preparations for a general strike starting around March 20, having failed to persuade the government to grant a wage hike, a union spokesman said Thursday.

The unions are circulating a petition demanding support for an increase in the minimum take-home wage and changes in laws governing salary negotiations and social costs, a spokesman for the Society of Independent Unions of Croatia (SSSH) said.

If the unions' claims are not agreed by Friday, March 15, they will launch a general strike on around March 20, SSSH spokesman Hasim Bahtijari said.

Union president Dragutin Lesar said last month he hoped to get 400,000 people to sign the referendum backing the union's claims.

So far Thursday, the government has not agreed to the unions' demands, a spokesman said.

According to official figures, unemployment last year affected around 17 percent of the working population in Croatia.

The government has protested that the cost of the unions claims would break the state budget. President Franjo Tudjman has slammed the planned strike as "undemocratic."

Croatia: Defense Lawyers Criticize Spy Trial Process

AU1303182996 Paris AFP in English 1729 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Zagreb, March 13 (AFP)—Defence lawyers acting for 15 people charged with spying for rump Yugoslavia and Serb rebels on Wednesday [13 March] accused military prosecutors of refusing proper access to necessary documents.

Silvije Degen, one of Croatia's leading lawyers, said the military prosecutors of the case which opened in Zagreb Monday had refused the defence "the necessary access to all the legal documents."

"We were refused access to more than 1,500 pages of documentation gathered by the prosecution, and then got access but too late to prepare a defence," Degen told AFP.

Degen's Croatian Serb client, Nikola Ivancevic, was arrested on October 23, 1995 and accused of spying for Serb rebels while working at the Croatian Parliament.

He is being held in a Zagreb military jail, along with 11 others, while three others—Mihajlo Knezevic, Mirko Vuletic and Mile Kosanovic—are believed on the run. The three have been charged with being the ringleaders of the alleged spy network.

Rebel Serbs took over one third of Croatia in 1991 when Croatia declared independence. The rebellion effectively ended in August 1995.

According to prosecutors at the military tribunal in Zagreb, 10 of the 15 accuseds have pleaded not guilty, three have pleaded guilty and two have refused to plead.

A plea from the defence lawyers that the military tribunal was not competent to hear the case because none of those accused was currently in the Croatian military was thrown out Monday, the court's presiding judge told AFP Tuesday.

Croatia: HDZ's Seks Criticizes Opposition, Media

AU1403114096 Split SLOBODNA DALMACIJA in Serbo-Croatian 8 Mar 96 p 5

[Interview with Vladimir Seks, a member of the Croatian Democratic Community [HDZ] Presidency, by Olga

Ramljak; place and date not given: "The HDZ Is Mostly Attacked by Totalitarian Parties!"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The echoes produced by the HDZ Main Committee first meeting have not calmed yet, since the opposition has been unanimously accusing the ruling party of Bolshevism and a paranoid fabrication of internal and external enemies. Therefore we asked HDZ Presidency member Vladimir Seks what was the main aim of the HDZ Main Committee meeting. Was its aim to show the power and monolithic structure of the HDZ in the search for solutions to current problems as compared to the opposition, or was it something else?

[Seks] The aim of the HDZ Main Committee meeting was to define the future HDZ tactics, which will be important for the development of the social and constitutional state, since conditions have changed; there is peace now. Assuming that peace has come—although there is still the burden of the reintegration of eastern Slavonija, but Croatia has elaborated all options for the achievement of its territorial integrity, so that everything is going by its own logic and rhythm—the HDZ leadership has found it necessary to define a new course in order to be able to implement its program fully, especially the part related to the development of social justice, law, and order. They have, for objective reasons, been suppressed all the time up to now.

[Ramljak] In other words, this is the new HDZ tactics.

[Seks] Yes, but this practically means the accomplishment of the HDZ basic strategic aims, but with a significantly quicker dynamics and the obligation of all party officials—both legislative and executive—to try to invigorate the part of the party program related to social issues and the strengthening of the legal system.

[Ramljak] Why did you attack the opposition in the Main Committee; why did you not allow criticism of HDZ members?

[Seks] Let us first define the notion of attack: The HDZ has been consistently exposed to concentrated political attacks on both its members and policies. It is claimed that the HDZ has fulfilled its historical task of creating the Croatian state and that it is not able to respond to the challenges the present Croatian state and society are confronted with, which means that it should leave the political scene. The HDZ is accused of inefficiency, inability, and lack of real political will to efficiently resolve problems of social injustice and lawfulness. In the meeting of its Main Committee, the HDZ wanted to unmask the tactics of the opposition parties, every single one of them and all of them together, toward the HDZ. The HDZ wanted to confront its members and the public with these facts. It is only natural that every party assesses the policy of its political opponents toward itself, and it is again being planted maliciously on us that we have reintroduced the methods of our enemy.

Opposition Unrealistic

[Ramljak] Is the opposition a Croatian enemy?

[Seks] No, it is not. This thesis is stubbornly being planted among us with the transparent aim of disqualifying the HDZ as a totalitarian party that wants to introduce a dictatorship. I have to say that such methods are used only by parties that support totalitarian systems.

[Ramljak] What does the HDZ hold against the opposition?

[Seks] The key reproaches can be summarized in several points. First of all, the inability to be realistic and critical, and find the real reasons and causes that have been preventing solutions to some current problems in Croatia; the opposition, in other words, claims that the HDZ does not know how to, does not want to, or cannot solve the problems. The opposition deliberately forgets that the reason was the objective situation caused by the war.

The second key reproach is that associations are made between completely different political forces with completely different programs and goal, the only aim being to depose the HDZ before the next election or without an election.

The third reason is that a considerable part of the opposition persists in circulating stories about alleged rifts and clashes within the HDZ, about the beginning of its end, the aim of which is to destabilize the HDZ.

The fourth reason is that some of the political parties and circles in European countries want a political rule in Croatia that will submit Croatian national interests to the political interests of others. The HDZ is the biggest hurdle in this respect, since it opposes the everlasting efforts of big countries to force the small ones—by formally recognizing their sovereignty—to be obedient. A part of the Croatian opposition allows itself to be misled by "this siren call"; they do not recognize the real intentions of these international circles and accept their financial help, sponsorship, and advice.

[Ramljak] Why was it not allowed in the Main Committee to criticize your own mistakes, although the party was presented as monolithic?

[Seks] I would not agree that it was not allowed, but the main aim of the meeting was to define the tactics as well as short-term and long-term aims in all areas of social life, including a general assessment of the areas in which the realization of a part of the HDZ's programs has not been successful. No one was prevented from paying a contribution for the journal that will be published. The key issue was that the HDZ required of its members and representatives in legislative and executive bodies that they act preventatively and repressively against all those who misuse laws, especially to disclose the links that open the possibilities for corruption, the connections in the field of finances between politicians and officials with people outside the state and politics.

Suspicions About Corruption

[Ramljak] Let us discuss the interview you recently gave for SLOBODNA DALMACIJA in which the prosecution of criminals was discussed, or, in other words, the necessity of the state to respond to irregularities in the privatization process. Where are the results, and when will the first be seen?

[Seks] That conversation was related to the consequences of the investigation results to which the State Auditing Service came. I said explicitly that the State Auditing Service report showed that there was the problem that certain law stipulations and regulations were not respected by a considerable number of ministries, state authorities, and users of the state budget. I also said that these violations could make one suspect that "they opened the door to corruption." The state authorities in charge must verify what was in the back of the violation of these regulations, in order to be able to claim whether that was corruption or not. Later on the journalist I talked to added to the text something I did not say; it was written in the text that I had spoken about certain cases of misuse as if they had already been confirmed. I have to say, however, that the only thing that is clear about the State Auditing Agency report is that the law has been violated: That, for example, bid invitations have not been published, which points to the possibility that there are corruption cases. It must be established now why this has not been done. This points to the possibility that someone might have had some financial advantage. The State Auditing Agency has given the starting point, and it is up to the attorney general, the financial police, the customs authorities, and the tax revenue administration to establish the reasons why laws have been violated. The State Auditing Agency made a list of cases in which regulations and laws were violated, and it has to be established now why this was done.

As an example I mentioned the Ministry of Justice, which bought fifty cars without a bid invitation, which opposes law requirements. This is a large sum of money. The former Minister Crnic claimed that this was not true, and I waited for the discussion about the State Auditing Agency report to end, and when it was over, it was established that the Ministry of Justice did not act according to the law; it collected offers instead of publishing a bid invitation. Minister Crnic must know the difference between a bid invitation and the collection of offers from car importers.

Courts Congested

[Ramljak] This leads us to the question why the HDZ Main Committee marked courts and media as the weakest link in the chain of the legal rule and the functioning of the society.

[Seks] The courts have been marked as a weak point because there are a lack of judges and a large number of old cases that have congested the courts. They have been criticized in order to establish why they do not function. The HDZ wanted to find out the real reasons in order to solve these two knots of inefficiency in the judicial power.

[Ramljak] Is the announcement of the HDZ leadership that the criteria for the selection of judges have to be established in line with that criticism?

[Seks] The present judges and attorneys general passed their decisions and expressed sentences in the former regime. The HDZ presidency has established that a method has to be found that will preclude the election of those who violated all elementary norms of correct and honest work in the courts. The motive was the case of two judges in Zadar who have been appointed judges now and of whom the attorney general claims that they convicted Croats to long imprisonment for the expression of their national feelings, which causes revulsion among the citizens. You must not forget that judges are now civil servants appointed until the end of their professional career.

[Ramljak] What about the media?

[Seks] Some media have been marked by the HDZ as destructive, not only toward the HDZ but also toward the whole political life and the official policy in Croatia; they even go beyond limits of good taste in their wish to rehabilitate the former system. By elaborating the thesis that "it was better earlier," they support the thesis in the masked way that Yugoslavia and socialism were a better solution to Croatia than the present democratic and independent Croatia. This part of the media is controlled by the people who were the most fervent opponents of the independent and sovereign Croatia.

Penal Reform

[Ramljak] What do the changes to the penal law, the so-called mini penal reform mean for the media?

[Seks] It should provide the framework for the media's work, which corresponds to the situation in democratic states of Europe. A difference must be made between investigative journalism, which complies with the ethics of that profession and which is entitled to exercise criticism of the ruling power too, and slander and offense. It must be known how far it is allowed to go. Furthermore, this kind of press receives information through certain channels about military or state secrets, and no democratic country in the world allows the spreading of such information in the media. A strange mentality has developed, even in objective and correct journalists: Objective and positive writing about the HDZ and the ruling power means servile and submissive journalism. The HDZ wants all media to be objective and critical, it wants them to study, research, and comment on the phenomena in the society without hushing anything up, but at the same time it does not want anything to be planted on someone else.

Croatia: Mesic Interviewed on Power Struggle in HDZ

96BA0178A Split FERAL TRIBUNE in Serbo-Croatian 5 Feb 96 pp 6-7

[Interview with Stipe Mesic, president of the Croatian Independent Democrats, by Zoran Daskalovic; place and date not given: "Witch-Hunt a la Seks"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Daskalovic] In the fight against crime which the top leadership of the HDZ [Croatian Democratic Union] has started, the star of the campaign, Vladimir Seks, accused you of frustrating a similar action in 1993, along with a small group of former HDZ leaders. Is that true?

[Mesic] The only thing which is true is that I have always advocated the functioning of a law-governed state. I persistently advocated the autonomy of institutions—for the police, prosecutors, courts, and others to do their jobs without the influence of individuals and groups from the outside. That is precisely why I got into a conflict with certain people in the top leadership of the HDZ who did not want that. Seks started a witch-hunt, that is, a hunt in which he, bypassing institutions, would be the witch-hunter. He certainly is not going to prosecute himself, Milas, Vukojevic, or Zuzul, none in the top leadership of the HDZ, but probably some people whom they want to sacrifice.

[Daskalovic] Is that the only reason for starting the campaign?

[Mesic] I think that all of this is an expression of accounts being settled within the party, and there is no likelihood at all of the law-governed state beginning to function. Incidentally, this kind of thing is characteristic of all totalitarian regimes: We are familiar with their practice of establishing party-state commissions which then supposedly investigate certain cases, but all of this is actually a function of battles between political parties, and does not help to promote the law-governed state. You see, that same Seks sold his apartment for 80,000 German marks [DM] at a time when war was at the gates of Osijek and when it was difficult for anyone to be able to sell his house or apartment, and he did so probably with the help of one of the government or banking institutions, and then in Zagreb he obtained the right of occupancy in a state-owned apartment with a floor space of 160 square meters, when that was no longer allowed, because the right of tenancy had already been abolished. In the end, he purchased that apartment for some DM20,000. And now Seks is going to prosecute crime? It is ridiculous.

The Battle for Inheritance

[Daskalovic] How deep and fierce is the split of which you speak in the HDZ?

[Mesic] In leaving the HDZ as a democratic group or faction, we said that the erosion of the HDZ would continue, because this was a movement made up of people from the ultraright to the ultraleft. On one side, you have Gojko Susak, who uses the fascist salute, and on the other, Elij Martincic, who says of himself that he is an absolute antifascist. It is therefore clear that there can never be unity in the party, and there will inevitably be polarization, not only into two wings, but there will be more than that. The question is what will be left of the HDZ? This attempt to guide the cutting edge toward those who are allegedly nostalgic for Yugoslavia, toward people from the former regime, is old rhetoric. The communists also kept on for a long time accusing the old Yugoslav Government, because a scapegoat always has to be found so that one can hold on to power. That is probably what the HDZ will do until the next elections, when it certainly must leave the political scene.

[Daskalovic] In the current campaign against crime, there are people in the ranks of the HDZ who are talking about the enrichment of President Tudjman's family. To what extent, then, is this campaign also directed against him?

[Mesic] Well, Tudjman's family is in many businesses, although before this war none of them were involved in that kind of thing. It is probable that part of the campaign is, in fact, directed against Tudjman's family, and thereby against Tudjman as well. The question is how much of a sense he has of this, because up to now he has never done anything so that the transformation and privatization would be conducted *lege artis*. Factories have been bought on the basis of a telephone call, there have been quite a few cases when factories were sold for less than what they were worth to those favored, by intercession, and the intercession always came from those close to the top. Never were any of them called to account, nor were such transformations recalled for review. Croatia has been looted in this way, it has been left without funds, but also without an economy.

[Daskalovic] To what extent are those conflicts in the HDZ an expression of the struggle to be Tudjman's heir, especially in the context of emphasizing doubts about whether he can run for president of the state once again or what certain American newspapers have written about his alleged illness?

[Mesic] It is an old rule that whenever someone comes to power, the battle to be his heir begins. That is an inevitability, especially in the case of Tudjman, who came to power in his later years. If the information about Tudjman's illness is correct, about the examination in Dayton, about his health being seriously disrupted, that struggle for power will intensify more and more.

Susak Is Running Things

[Daskalovic] Who will take part in it?

[Mesic] Even now, one can easily see the ambitions of Defense Minister Susak, the ambitions of Seks, although Seks is the most remote possibility. He cannot even head up anything, because Tudjman has quite a bit of material about him which has been covered up, so that his tail is always stuck in the drawer: Whenever Tudjman puts a little pressure on his tail, he starts to squeal.

[Daskalovic] Nevertheless, there is a conflict?

[Mesic] It is quite obvious that a battle is being waged in the top leadership of the HDZ to be Tudjman's heir, and for control of the HDZ and the state. Those factions are still not altogether clear-cut, but they can be differentiated. It is quite clear to me, having been in the top leadership of the HDZ, that the article, for example, which came out in ST [expansion unknown], saying that Greguric is on one side and Seks on the other, holds no water. It is certain that Gojko Susak is on one side, and on the other are those who nevertheless want a democratic system in Croatia. Individuals will still emerge here and there, but that battle still cannot be waged in the HDZ, and they are now being cast down to a lower level. They are being cast down to the city of Zagreb, and here those groups in the HDZ must identify themselves. So this is the beginning of differentiation in the HDZ.

[Daskalovic] What about the Slavonia-Baranja organization of the HDZ? Seks talks about a "Slavonian lobby," and we have heard that Glavas is again warning that the Slavonia-Baranja HDZ could oppose the party's top leadership.

[Mesic] As far as Glavas is concerned, his reactions are, by definition, difficult to predict. One thing is certain, he has a very finetuned instinct and a very good sense of when certain processes are beginning to take place in the HDZ. He is probably now seeking a position to come out on the winning side, and therefore will be giving differing signals. I remember when the war began in Osijek, the HDZ there, under Glavas's leadership, adopted a decision to freeze its own activity. His assessment probably was that if a situation should occur, God forbid, in which he would be called to account, then it would be better to have as little responsibility as possible. In the end, Glavas fled from Osijek, he first hid in Cacinci and later in Perkovci, and then in the end he went to Osijek and deep in a bunker became a great fighter for the defense of the city.

He has been a fighter for collecting funds in the diaspora for the defense of Osijek. That must be acknowledged, and he did this very effectively, together with Adam Mestrovic and Kljajic, president of the District Court, who actually was not working as president of the court, but was making the rounds of the diaspora with these other two, collecting money. At the same time, they did nothing on the battlefield, they did not capture a single cannon, and they proclaimed themselves the main barrier to Serbian aggression. That is why I think Glavas is, even now, casting about for his own position, and it is possible that in the current battle in the HDZ he will not be on the winning side, because, as I say, he has an incredible instinct.

Milas's Racism

[Daskalovic] Up to now, the largest split in the HDZ has occurred in connection with the policy toward Bosnia-Herzegovina. Can state policy toward Bosnia-Herzegovina, even now after the Dayton accords, be an occasion once again for a new split in the HDZ and in the government?

[Mesic] It can, because those who favored a division of Bosnia-Herzegovina in Croatian politics have remained in solid positions, and they are rather loud. Just look at Vice Vukojevic, one of the greatest advocates of the division of Bosnia, or Ivan Milas, who said there can be no question of the Croats and Bosniaks living together, which is pure racism; do you remember the nonsense which Nedjeljko Mihanovic talked and all the stupidities uttered about Bosnia-Herzegovina? These people have remained in their positions, and they certainly do not favor an integral Bosnia-Herzegovina; they are still working to prevent the Dayton and Paris accords from being carried out. Not to mention that their operatives, that is, people who are their tools, are still in their positions in Herzeg-Bosna, they are even sitting in the Croatian parliament. Until all of them are removed from key places where decisions are made and policy implemented, we can hardly expect a policy of principle in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

[Daskalovic] How can they hold out? Is this fight against crime actually meant to cloud over the key problems which Croatia still faces?

[Mesic] It is clear that people are having a very hard time getting along, 100,000 have gone abroad, numerous plants have been shut down, many people have lost their jobs, people are hardly making ends meet, and at such a time they like to hear rhetoric like this launched by the HDZ about hunting down war profiteers. The real problems will be clouded over by this. For instance, no one is asking how the war against the Bosniaks in Bosnia-Herzegovina was financed.

[Daskalovic] Recently, Prime Minister Matesa made a statement that the economic situation in Croatia would have been better if in past years they had not had to help Herzeg-Bosna.

[Mesic] Yes, but why is it that this was never mentioned anywhere in the budget of any year? Where did those funds come from? Our budget is full of fog. You have seen that last year we had three million kunas for the National Security Office, but this year 74 million kunas were envisaged. Again, everything is clouded over, and in practical terms a political police is being formed, a new UDB-a [State Security Administration] for which funds are needed. And those funds will be used in various ways, but they have never been noted down and stated specifically. As has been the case up to now, this budget is also shrouded in fog. We have never known how much Croatia is spending in Herzeg-Bosna and what benefits it has been getting from all that. It has only been suffering damage.

The HDZ Deception

[Daskalovic] Along with all that, the crisis in Zagreb has gone on for several months now. It is said in the top leadership of the HDZ that you and Mr. Manolic are behind that crisis. Are the two of you really its creators and main protagonists?

[Mesic] That is an outright deception in order to find a justification for using undemocratic methods in preventing the opposition from assuming the power in Zagreb it won in the election. Mesic and Manolic supposedly caused a parliamentary crisis, and so now they are again the protagonists of the new crisis. They do not realize that the crisis is in the HDZ. We only took note of it, and we did not want to participate in the work of an HDZ of that kind, which was headed toward centralization of power, centralization of funds, isolation of Croatia, severing of ties with Europe, nationalization of losing operations and privatization of those that were profitable.... We were certainly against that, and we did not do harm to Croatia; just the opposite. But they wanted this danger of the two of us to wave like a flag, and they wanted to associate this Zagreb crisis with us, although it has nothing to do with us, although for just two days I was a candidate for mayor, because we are the third strongest opposition party in the Municipal Assembly.

[Box, p 7]

Stjepan Mesic, a lawyer by education, was born in 1934 in Orahovica. The book *Who's Who in Croatia* gives this description of his "career": "In 1966, deputy in the Croatian Assembly; in 1968, president of Orahovica Opcina; in 1990, prime minister of the Republic of Croatia; in 1992, the last president of the SFRY State Presidency; president of the House of Representatives of the Assembly of the Republic of Croatia; major general in the Croatian Army." Since that time, in mid-1994, following a spectacular interview in FERAL TRIBUNE, he left the incumbent party and became president of the Croatian Independent Democrats [HND], and his long trip to dissidency has continued. In a new interview with FERAL, he provides fresh material for the brochure "Who's Who in the HDZ."

[Box, p 7]

Brkic's Sweet Secret

[Daskalovic] Why did Alojz Brkic, your only deputy in the House of Representatives of the Assembly, leave you the other day? Did the HDZ recruit him in order to throw the HND out of the parliament once and for all?

[Mesic] That situation about our deputy in the parliament, Alojz Brkic, is still undefined. Brkic himself says that he will be operating independently in the parliament for personal reasons, but at the same time he still has not left the party. In any case, we will be resolving this in a few days in the party, but if Mr. Brkic does, in fact, leave the HND, we remain a parliamentary party. That is, when 14 of us left the HDZ and established a new party, the HDZ continued to obtain funds from the budget for us, as though we had remained their deputies. The position of the HDZ, then, has remained the same, and presumably now our position has also remained the same. In addition, we have four deputies in the House of Zupanijas, so that in spite of everything we remain in the parliament anyway.

FYROM: Gligorov Sends Note to Cairo Summit

AU1303175796 Skopje MIC in English 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The President of the Republic of Macedonia [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM] Kiro Gligorov has sent a written message to the participants in the summit on struggle against terrorism, which is scheduled to be held in Cairo. In the message, he stated his support to the just and humane efforts of the international community to battle terrorism, which threatens the peace and security of individual states and whole regions, as well as the life and tranquility of the people. Furthermore, President Gligorov encouraged the efforts in the peace process in the Near East, contrary to the efforts which obstruct it, as are methods of terror and pressure.

In the message, reminding of the fact that even in our country "we have felt the malicious hand of violence," President Kiro Gligorov underlined the necessity to wage an uncompromising battle against terrorism, as the concern of the most responsible factors in every country and the international community as a whole.

FYROM: Frckovski Comments on Balkan Relations

AU1303165596 Skopje NOVA MAKEDONIJA in Macedonian 13 Mar 96 pp 1-2

[Report by D. Culev on a briefing by Foreign Minister Ljubomir Frckovski to the Assembly's Foreign Affairs Commission in Skopje on 12 March: "Equal and Equally Good Relations With the Neighbors"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday, Ljubomir Frckovski, minister of foreign affairs of the Republic of Macedonia [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM], attended a session of the Assembly's Foreign Affairs Commission, at which he reported on the country's current foreign policy. It was said that this kind of meeting would become the practice in communications between the Foreign Ministry and the Foreign Affairs Commission. Minister Frckovski made a special review of Macedonia's relations with its neighbors and he reemphasized its adherence to the policy of equidistance and the construction of good relations with the neighbors.

This was the first time since 1992 that a foreign minister had attended a meeting of the Commission and, as its chairman Ilinka Mitrevska said, the reason for this had only been the "personal attitudes of the former ministers," who did not find it appropriate to communicate with this Assembly body, even at times when Macedonian foreign policy was making great strides.

Starting by reviewing relations with the FRY, Frckovski recalled that Belgrade is coming under pressure from the EU and from nearly every other country and that its further integration into European and world associations is preconditioned by the recognition of the Republic of Macedonia.

"From the outset, we have been offering a solution for the regulation of these relations through notes on the recognition and establishment of diplomatic relations, which is a normal method free of additional difficulties and disputes," Frckovski said, "but in proposing this, we entered upon a special agreement that raised some other questions in this context.

"We accepted it, we started negotiations on such an agreement, and I believe that we have emerged with a successful solution. We have regulated the most important issue, that of the continuity of our state. They have sent a fax in which their government did not have any comments on this agreement. However, matters became complicated subsequently over the question of practical succession, because they insisted on inserting a clause into the agreement that would, in their opinion, regulate the issue and which went as follows: Macedonia and the FRY do not have any mutual claims; this effectively resolves the question of succession and, in their view, this would be the beginning of clear relations.

"Our reply," Frckovski continued, "was that this question should not be linked to the question of a general regulation of the relations. This can be further discussed within a process that has already been established on the multilateral level with the participation of the EU and the international community, as was the group for the succession of former Yugoslavia, which continues functioning legally in new international forms of negotiations. So, this question remains open and we are trying to find a formula that will support our view as it is because we cannot accept a solution to this question that will equalize all properties. If it remains open, it can block the process.

"We," the Macedonian foreign minister noted, "could eventually accept the general formula that we would negotiate on the mutual requirements of the two states with good will and with the purpose of reaching an agreement. I want to say that we will avoid a violent agreement, that is to say, an agreement that would be outside international law. However, we cannot accept anything more than to say that we have a general desire to negotiate, and this is in fact the reason for our participation in the multilateral negotiations on succession."

As for other matters connected with the FRY, the minister believes that they are good in terms of border relations, transport, and trade, which are all within regular parameters, considering the problems that a country faces after an embargo of some duration.

Without Automatism

Turning to relations with Albania, Frckovski said that the planned visit of Prime Minister Meksi was expected to go ahead, having been postponed following recent events in Albania. He also said that it was up to the Albanian side to set the date.

"This visit is important for the region, particularly for our two countries, because we expect to sign at least four documents during this visit—basic documents on solving the border questions—and because we believe that we will be taking a step forward about the name of our state, bearing in mind that Albania has recognized us under the name, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. This is important to us, and we think that this is a step forward toward stable relations. There are some points that remain open in one of the agreements: Albania insists on the removal of the tax for crossing the border. Our view is that this is pressure from illegal workers, illegal labor coming from Albania, and we believe that this question should be resolved in a different way. We do not believe that there can be an automatism here, because a country's policy is constructed according to current developments on its border. In this case, we have a problem, but there is an opportunity for negotiations, and we believe that this problem can be overcome.

"There are about 14 agreements to be signed with the Republic of Bulgaria and they are waiting for a way out of the cul-de-sac in which the Bulgarian political leadership has placed itself because of the political developments after four agreements with the Republic of Macedonia had been signed in the Macedonian language," said Frckovski. "Something happened to them, and they changed their attitude over the language issue, although there is a general agreement between the prime ministers and the interior ministries in the Macedonian language."

It is a question of how to surmount this situation, which Frckovski called ridiculous from an international legal aspect, just at the moment when Macedonia and Bulgaria are half way to promoting relations in many fields, and are just waiting for a solution to the "language" dispute. "We," Frckovski said, "have raised the question of a general agreement on friendship and cooperation such as those that are usually signed by state presidents and generally create a framework for all future relations. We put this initiative on the table, and it was accepted with good will." According to Frckovski, relations with Bulgaria can be assessed as positive with the exception of the problem of the language about which the Macedonian side is trying to find a solution in communications at all levels.

Desire for Dialogue

Concerning the situation with Greece, Frckovski said that it was the way it was: There is intensive bilateral economic, social, and political cooperation, particularly within the numerous associations and organizations in Europe, where Greece supports the Republic of Macedonia. The issue of the negotiations on the name is totally separate. This is a process that will go on and should in no way be linked to the intensive economic and political cooperation that is under way. In this context, Frckovski pledged to start direct bilateral contacts in accordance with the New York accord in all fields of cooperation.

"I have sent and I have received an invitation from Greek Foreign Minister Pangalos for a meeting and I have an unconcealed desire to open a dialogue," Frckovski reported. "There must not be any doubt that there is a sincere and direct desire for cooperation in Macedonia."

Frckovski went on to report on the activities that lie ahead of Macedonia at the international level, in which he mentioned the declaration on joining EFTA [European Free Trade Association] that will be signed by Minister Frckovski on 30 March in Liechtenstein, the efforts for Macedonia's inclusion in the European agreement on customs and taxes, as well as the Black Sea association that is presently chaired by the Romanian foreign minister, which had also been discussed during Melescanu's [Romanian foreign minister] visit to Macedonia. Frckovski welcomed the initiative of the Foreign Affairs Commission on the appointment of future Macedonian ambassadors, which was that they should first contact the Commission (in a so-called hearing), after which the Commission would give its opinion to the president of the Republic before the ambassadors take up their duties.

Answering some questions from the members of the Commission, Frckovski viewed the current overhaul and reorganization of the Foreign Ministry. He mentioned that the number of departmental heads had been decreased from 10 to eight, but that there was a shortage of personnel in the ministry. Namely, instead of 330, as projected, there are only 120 personnel in the ministry, plus 60 more at embassies.

The Foreign Policy Commission also set out program for further activities. The new item in this program is the Commission's intention to be more intensively involved in the country's foreign policy. In this sense, it was suggested to enlarge this Assembly body from the current 13 to 17 members, because of its expanded activities and the need to form subcommissions or subgroups in charge of particular fields.

FYROM: Legal Advice on Election Petition Sought

AU1303183596 Skopje MIC in English 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Minister of Justice Vlado Popovski said that "the Ministry of Justice is not competent to give an authentic interpretation of the articles of the law that pertain to the gathering of signatures for new elections. The Assembly gives such interpretations and we, as a body, will give our expert opinion, but only after we are asked for one." This is how Minister Popovski explained what the answer would be to the request of the Democratic Party for an authentic interpretation of the question as to the legal form for the gathering of signatures for new elections.

The Ministry of Justice has contacted experts from the Council of Europe for this purpose.

FYROM: Justice Minister on New Criminal Code

AU1303181896 Skopje MIC in English 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Minister of Justice Vlado Popovski announced at yesterday's news conference that the new Criminal Code should set the foundations of a rational and efficient criminal system, in coordination with the European principles and standards. "The very definition of a criminal act is new. It is no longer a 'publicly dangerous act,' but 'an unlawful act,' which is legally defined as a 'criminal act with characteristics determined by law,'" Minister Popovski explained.

A new element that was introduced is life imprisonment. It will be pronounced for criminal acts done with premeditation and in a heavy form. The maximum prison sentence is 15 years. In cases of life imprisonment, a reduction of the sentence can be required before the expiration of 15 years imprisonment.

A new element as well is that the courts are now in charge of giving parole. The state bodies can no longer interfere in the work of the courts, which will also be in charge of keeping criminal records in future.

The shortest prison sentence is increased from 15 to 30 days in prison.

FYROM: Statistics on Revenue, Wages, Investments

AU1303181096 Skopje MIC in English 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The overall revenues for financing public needs at the end of last year totaled 6.64 billion MKD [Macedonian denars], however, in January, 1996, they dropped to 4.91 billion MKD. The real indicators show that last year the wages dropped to an average of 4.5 percent. This drop in the economy amounts to 3 percent, and in the non-economy 10.2 percent.

143,613 workers have been recorded who do not receive wages regularly, sometimes one, two, or more months late. Of them, over 100,000 workers have not received wages for more than three months. This means that 34 percent of all the employees in the country work without being properly compensated for their labor.

As to investments, 409 million MKD were invested in December 1995, which is more than in November, but far less than, for instance, June last year, when the investments totalled to 563 million MKD.

The latest indicators of foreign-trade work show that in November, last year, the exports added up to $114.3 million, and the imports—$187 million.

Poland: UOP To Investigate Case of Suspected Spy

WS1403125096 Warsaw EXPRESS WIECZORNY in Polish 12 Mar 96 p 1

[Article by "(kem)": "Policemen Were Investigating a Different Case When They Caught a Spy"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Three weeks ago, Warsaw policemen contributed to the detention of...a foreign intelligence agent. The case has been taken over by the Office of State Protection [UOP]. Only a few people are informed about the case, and they have orders not to pass on any information to reporters.

The policemen discovered the spy in the course of an investigative operation in an unrelated case. Materials containing state secrets and equipment used by foreign intelligence services were allegedly intercepted. An inquiry allowed the discovery of the owner of this equipment. At this point, the case was taken over by UOP. The spy, a Polish citizen working for a foreign intelligence service, was arrested. All those who know anything about the case have been ordered to keep silent. The policemen who played a role in capturing the spy were granted cash awards a few days ago. Two independent sources confirmed this.

"I know nothing about the case. Ask UOP," Chief of Warsaw Police Michal Otrebski told the EXPRESS WIECZORNY reporter uneasily in a telephone conversation on 8 March.

The press office of the Ministry of Internal Affairs responded similarly.

"We do not have any official information on the case," said Andrzej Przemyski, the press spokesman of Police Headquarters.

As we learned from unofficial sources, the telephone call the EXPRESS WIECZORNY reporter made to the chief of Warsaw police whipped up a storm. Speculation flared as to when and how the information was "leaked." A search was launched to establish who had contacted our reporter. One person was threatened with disciplinary measures for betraying state secrets (even though that person had only claimed not to know anything about the case).

The UOP spokesman told the EXPRESS WIECZORNY reporter that the secret services will not comment on these reports.

Poland: Russian Foreign Minister Arrives on Official Visit

LD1403114496 Warsaw TV Polonia Network in Polish 1100 GMT 14 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov has started an official two-day visit to Poland.

[Correspondent Monika Sieradzka—identified by screen caption—over video of Primakov descending from aircraft down gangway, making a statement into a microphone, and then being driven off in a motorcade] Yevgeniy Primakov said that the issue of the corridor through Suwalki Province has been blown up by journalists. Primakov said he wants to talk with Polish politicians primarily about good-neighborly relations between Russia and Poland.

Deputy Foreign Minister Stefan Meller and Ambassador Yuriy Kashlev welcomed Primakov at the airport. Primakov is now meeting Polish Foreign Minister Dariusz Rosati. In the afternoon, the Russian minister will meet Prime Minister Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz, and tomorrow he will meet President Aleksander Kwasniewski.

Poland: Primakov on NATO, Bilateral Relations

WS1303145596 Warsaw POLITYKA in Polish 16 Mar 96 pp 16-17

[Interview with Russian Foreign Affairs Minister Yevgeniy Primakov by Krzysztof Mroziewicz; place and date not given: "Not Everything Is Running Smoothly"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Mroziewicz] When you headed the intelligence services of the Russian Federation, you kept saying that your services would prevent NATO from expanding. You repeated this opinion as foreign affairs minister. However, recently we have heard you say that Central European countries must not be prohibited from pursuing their own foreign policies. What does this change mean?

[Primakov] First of all, I would like to stress that there has not been any significant change as far as my views on NATO's eastward expansion are concerned. The question you have asked me contains a rather free interpretation of the statements which I made when I held my previous office. No Russian services, neither the intelligence nor the Foreign Affairs Ministry, are able to prevent NATO expansion by their decisions. The organization which has the power to deal with this problem is NATO itself, and Russia is not part of it. Nonetheless, we should take advantage of the force of argument to influence possible decisions. Our national interests require this. More than two years ago, the Foreign Intelligence Services drew up a report whose primary conclusions regarding NATO expansion were agreed upon with the Russian president and became the basis of the official stand which Russia took on this issue.

While answering your question, I would like to elaborate on some key issues.

We assume that if NATO's military structure came closer to our borders, this would inevitably cause a serious problem for our national security. There is a general consensus on this issue among the Russian public and political elites. Everyone understands that, for example, installation of NATO tactical missiles with nuclear warheads very near to our borders is contrary to the Russian interests; the time they need to reach major objects in Russia is not longer than the flight time of the medium-range Pershing-2 missile, which has been destroyed in line with a treaty.

We are talking about this quite openly and we expect that our fears will be taken into consideration. I am convinced that it is possible to find mutually acceptable solutions by means of intensive political dialog which would take into account the interests of all sides. We think highly of the concepts put forward by our foreign political partners regarding their security problems, and we are prepared to discuss them. At the same time, we have the right to expect that they will take an appropriate stand on our point of view on these problems.

[Mroziewicz] As far as NATO is concerned, so far Russia has used all conceivable arguments except one: it cannot imagine that Central Europe might become part of the euro-atlantic structures because it believes that it may be possible to recreate its former sphere of influence. Do you share this opinion?

[Primakov] Speculations on attempts to recreate some spheres of influence smack of the old days. These are all stereotypes and a language of times gone by. We are sincerely interested in having friendly relations with all our neighbors, without exception. However, this does not mean that Russia wants to dominate the postcommunist region. Those who accuse Russia of having neoimperial aspirations either cannot see the profound changes which have taken place in our country, or deliberately sin against the truth, trying to justify some political goals of their own.

I also want to say clearly that Russia understands the desire of the Central European countries to become part of the European and North Atlantic structures. Behind that desire there may be perfectly justified fears and interests. However, why should Russia pay for this by saying okay to the plans of the world's strongest military bloc to move its infrastructure closer to Russia's borders? In addition, it is a bloc which was set up during the "Cold War" to fight the Soviet Union. Can anyone maintain that after the "Cold War" this bloc lost its military character and turned almost exclusively into a political group? I do not think so.

[Mroziewicz] Is it safe to draw corridors on foreign maps? Are there such corridors anywhere in the world?

[Primakov] First and foremost, it would be advisable to see to it that the terms used here are clear. The fact that someone quite clumsily begun using the word "corridor" caused quite a commotion, including, as far as I know, in the media. In addition, someone has attempted to introduce elements of distrust in our bilateral relations and to use it as another "iron" argument in favor of Poland's integration with NATO. Here is what you can hear: There was the "Gdansk corridor," and now Russia is trying to build another one on Polish territory.

As a matter of fact, all corridors are out of the question, let alone extraterritorial ones. This is not what the entire issue is even roughly about. It is about ensuring generally used transit communication forms—of course, only if Poland agrees to this. In this particular case, it would be a route from Russia through the territories of Belarus and Poland to Kaliningrad oblast. The parties involved discussed it on various occasions earlier, in both bilateral and trilateral contacts. Incidentally, results of those analyses can be found in documents.

Establishment of additional communication routes to that part of Russian territory which is farthest to the west lies in our economic interest.

It seems that such a project is also favorable to both Poland and Belarus. A more profound analysis might be presented by experts of the three parties. At any rate, whipping up emotions over this issue and trying to find a nonexistent political context in it is unfounded, to say the least.

[Mroziewicz] What position does Poland occupy in Russia's foreign policy?

[Primakov] Poland has traditionally been considered important in our foreign policy. Your country is a huge neighbor, it occupies a very important place on the geopolitical map of Europe. Our views on the majority of international problems are similar, sometimes even identical. This creates a solid foundation for fruitful cooperation in the field of foreign policy. We have good cooperation within international organizations, such as the Baltic States Cooperation Council. Russia wants to establish partnership relations with the states of Central and East Europe which would be truly beneficial to all. We highly appreciate the support of Polish diplomats in this respect.

The basic issue on which our views, unfortunately, are substantially different is the enlargement of NATO to the east. I am aware, of course, that there is an ongoing debate in Poland on state security. Is, however, joining NATO the only or, more importantly, the proper way of guaranteeing that security?

It is generally known that Poland has decided to join the EC. [as published] Negotiations leading to that target are to be held soon. The EC has already decided it will considerably broaden the scope of its prerogatives in the field of foreign policy and security in the nearest future. At the same time, Poland is an "associate member" of the EC. Does that not mean anything for state security? After all, if this is considered insufficient, Poland could ask NATO for security guarantees without becoming a member. I do not think the North Atlantic Treaty would be an obstacle in receiving such guarantees. In the course of the Bosnia operation, NATO exceeded its competences. A precedence has thus been created for nonmember states obtaining security guarantees.

There is one more thing I would like to say. From my previous job I know that the law enforcement forces of our states closely cooperate in counteracting such things as organized crime, drugs, money laundering, etc. I think these phenomena, widely referred to as the "challenges of the new generation," are the real threat to the security of particular states.

We should foster cooperation in many areas. The broader the contacts between Poland and Russia, the less foundations for any dubiety in mutual contacts. We are prepared to cooperate very actively to attain that goal.

[Mroziewicz] The operations of the secret services in Russia brought a reaction from Chancellor Kohl in 1993, and most recently from the Czechs. U.S. and Polish media have carried reports on KGB plans targeted at supporting postcommunists in order to restore them to power. Could you comment?

[Primakov] When no real threats exist, imaginary ones are conjured. The spy mania that we occasionally see has only one purpose: to crush budding trust and understanding in relations between East and West. It serves someone, but not us.

[Mroziewicz] In the context of the problems we have touched upon, what are the prospects for future Polish-Russian relations?

[Primakov] Russia is genuinely interested in developing and reinforcing friendly relations with Poland which would be devoid of suspicion and distrust. We are verv pleased to note that Russian- Polish cooperation is very dynamic. There is an ongoing political dialog. We have been successfully removing all "stumbling blocks" from the past. Thanks to an effort on both sides, we have been able to find—or at least come close to finding—solutions to problems which chilled the atmosphere between us, among them the issue of Katyn. We believe that a review of the past should not put up barriers between nations.

We are observing positive phenomena in the field of economic cooperation. The volume of trade between our two countries has grown considerably, the problem of the mutual debt has been solved, contacts between particular regions are developing, especially between Kaliningrad oblast and the northeastern voivodships of Poland. Cultural ties are also booming.

This does not mean everything is running smoothly. A lot still remains to be done in the economy and in other areas. The outlook is bright. Let us hope that President Aleksander Kwasniewski's official visit to Russia in April will provide a new stimulus for bilateral contacts.

[Mroziewicz] How do you see the European structures of the future?

[Primakov] I think we should promote, especially within the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe, a search for a new European security structure within which there would be no divisions, which would be realistic, and which would guarantee each European state the same degree of security. NATO could be an element of such a structure. We are willing to cooperate very closely with NATO if it does not expand. We should create a uniform, pan-continental security system in which everyone would enjoy the same rights, responsibilities and guarantees.

Three weeks ago I took part in a ceremony marking Russia's entry into the Council of Europe (we are very grateful for Poland's support), during which I signed the proper documents. This is further proof that the fate of Russia is inseparably linked with the fate of European civilization. We cannot imagine Russia being placed beyond the family of European nations. We are prepared to continue to contribute to peace and stability on the continent and cultivate cooperation between the nations which inhabit it.

Poland: National Security Office Head on NATO

WS1303155596 Warsaw POLSKA ZBROJNA in Polish 13 Mar 96 pp 1-2

[Article by "AXW": "Joining NATO by the Year 2000"]

[FBIS Translated Text] According to Minister Jerzy Milewski, delays in the process of Poland's integration with NATO and EU structures currently pose the biggest threat to national security. "We intend to join NATO by the year 2000," the head of the National Security Office [BBN] said at his first news conference yesterday.

According to Minister Milewski, delays in our integration with NATO result from two factors—political problems related to Russia's opposition to expansion of the Alliance to the east, and the fact that our Armed Forces are adjusting to NATO structures too slowly. The BBN head believes that the problems associated with the reform of the Armed Forces should be seen as resistance of "human nature to any changes"; these problems should also be viewed together with the financial difficulties. Maciej Fleming, director general in BBN, stated that integration with NATO applies not only to the Armed Forces, but also to the entire national defense system, particularly as far as guaranteeing reserve mobilization.

At the news conference in BBN a great deal of attention was devoted to the plans of establishing the National Security Council. Even though there are relevant provisions in the Small Constitution, the council has not been set up yet. Minister Milewski said that the work on establishing the council is "not advanced at all" at the moment. He also stressed that President Kwasniewski's intentions to quickly set up the council have remained unchanged since the election campaign.

Minister Milewski also mentioned plans to reform the National Defense Committee [KOK], but added that this issue should be resolved in a constitutional discussion and that this is not within the powers of BBN. Milewski revealed that plans of restoring the prewar name of this organ—the State Defense Committee—are currently being viewed as a possibility. It is to be a closed-structure institution which will consist of only the highest ranking state officials.

Discussing the role which BBN should play, Minister Milewski said that he sees the office as an institution which coordinates all the measures which are linked to broadly understood concepts of national security and defense, and are currently made by such institutions as the National Defense Ministry, Internal Affairs Ministry [MSW], KOK, and the Defense Affairs Committee of the Council of Ministers. "I am convinced that with Kwasniewski as president, we stand a much better chance of playing such a role than we had under Lech Walesa," the BBN head said.

Minister Milewski spoke against the idea of uniting the military and civilian intelligence services, which came up during the discussion on separating the Office of State Protection [UOP] from MSW. "Poland is a sufficiently large country to have two special services," Milewski said. He added that it would be advisable to establish an institution which in the future could coordinate actions taken by WSI and UOP, especially in the area of intelligence operations.

Poland: 'Squabbles' Within SdRP Analyzed

WS1303150296 Poznan WPROST in Polish
10 Mar 96 pp 22-23

[Article by Eryk Mistewicz: "Three Faces of the Alliance"]

[FBIS Translated Text] At first, SLD [Democratic Left Alliance] Deputy Jozef Nowicki suggested that Jozef Oleksy should resign from the post of prime minister. When this became a fait accompli, Foreign Minister Dariusz Rosati expressed the opinion that Jozef Oleksy's election as SdRP [Social Democracy of the Polish Republic] chairman would complicate Poland's admission to European structures. SLD Deputy Andrzej Urbanczyk deemed Oleksy's election a great risk. These kinds of statements, which are becoming ever more emotional, not only violate party discipline but also indicate that there is competition among SLD factions.

Krzysztof Krol, chairman of the KPN [Confederation for an Independent Poland] parliamentary club, says: "Very recently, one envied the SLD's internal solidarity. Even when SLD leaders crossed swords, it was only done within their own circle." Janusz Czwojda from the Freedom Union's Bydgoszcz faction adds: "Their hermetism and diplomacy deserve praise." "Balance among the SLD's three principal pillars has been upset. Local organizations, weakened by the outflow of activists to the 'central apparatus,' are becoming increasingly confused, including over internal competition," points out a member of the PSL [Polish Peasant Party] Main Council.

While the presidential campaign united the efforts of all the activists of the groups that comprise the SLD, currently, according to the vivid description by a midlevel SdRP functionary, "we should elect a new chairman in such a way that we will be able to win the upcoming legislative elections in one harness."

Young Warsaw social democrats claim: "Diplomacy and mutual dependence have always been the SLD's trump cards." SLD Deputy Irena Nowacka asserts: "Aleksandr Kwasniewski was the kind of man who could lead both the party and the coalition. Currently, it is hard to find such a universal politician. Jerzy Szmajdzinski, the newly appointed chairman of the SLD parliamentary club, is more suitable for party leader than the leader of the coalition."

It appears from conversations with SLD activists that the principal division lines in their camp do not run along the tenets of the party platform (including the pace and scale of privatization, social security, and the like). They run along personnel issues: The search for a new leader continues, someone who would meet the expectations of the "boss." The SLD's electorate is not homogeneous, which gives rise to the appearance of various interest groups in their ranks. Ambitious leaders are trying to assume control over those groups.

After "announcing a competition" for Kwasniewski's successor [in the party], politicians who had remained in his shadow stepped up their activities.

Three factions within the SLD are comprised of supporters of three leaders: Leszek Miller, Jozef Oleksy, and Aleksander Kwasniewski. The latter tries to control the situation with the SdRP from a distance.

The faction of Jozef Oleksy, the SdRP's new chief, currently expresses the interests of so-called pragmatists, that is to say those activists who, depending on the external situation, would with the same vigor advocate increases in unemployment payments or expenditure cuts in the social sphere. These are rather unknown midlevel party activists—members of the SLD's voivodship branches, as well as voivodes and deputy voivodes affiliated with the SLD. Until recently, they pinned all their hopes on Jozef Oleksy, who was one of them—a functionary who had reached the top and would help others do the same.

Oleksy's supporters courageously withstood the accusation against the former prime minister of intelligence-type connections and played a decisive role in his election as party chairman.

Meanwhile, behind the scenes, Kwasniewski is depicted as a "soft frequenter of salons" and Miller as a "hopeless conservative." Even Oleksy, who publicly speaks with great respect about the young president, in his own circle allegedly ridicules Kwasniewski's incompetence and university failures.

The SdRP chairman recently criticized Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz and Aleksandr Kwasniewski for the removal of Jerzy Jaskiernia from the government, which became a vivid indicator of the fact that Oleksy's faction retains a peculiar status. However, Oleksy did not succeed in appointing Jerzy Konieczny to the post of interior minister.

OPZZ [All-Polish Trade Union Agreement] Chairperson Ewa Spychalska, who is more and more often considered a member of the "Oleksy team," reacted very emotionally to the replacement of the prime minister. When she publicly accused SdRP politicians of ignoring the OPZZ's opinion she primarily meant the party's [SdRP] and the SLD's recent leaders Kwasniewski and Cimoszewicz. The OPZZ leader thus demonstrated that the current prime minister and president should listen to her opinion. One of her colleagues adds: "They should listen to her and the OPZZ's opinion." Spychalska's emotions may be a result of the pressure on the part of the trade union's "rank and file," dissatisfied with the fact that the OPZZ leadership has too little influence on the situation in the coalition. This dissatisfaction may help strengthen Leszek Miller's faction.

Initially, Miller confirmed his position in the party primaries, but later on he yielded to Jozef Oleksy in the fight for party leadership. Nevertheless, Miller is building a faction within the SdRP which would pay greater attention to ideology and principles.

Speaking about Miller's supporters, certain leftist politicians mockingly say: "Their average age is 70 years; they are Polish People's Republic pensioners."

However, the former minister of labor is trying to meet the electorate's expectations better than other SLD leaders. This primarily concerns two groups of electors. The first is comprised of ordinary members of the PZPR [Polish United Workers Party], while the second is comprised of young people, mostly unemployed, as well as by ambitious young politicians. According to polls conducted by the Public Opinion Research Center, in the upcoming parliamentary election the SLD can primarily count on votes from people above 65 and below 24 years of age. For the same reason, Miller should be particularly careful about observing leftist phraseology, thanks to which he has solidified his influence on the electorate.

Witold Firak, SLD deputy and leader of the Union of Socialist Polish Youth, who is considered the Miller faction's representative in the "youth sphere" says: "We are currently competing with so-called financiers, who place the state's financial interests above social problems." The most frequently mentioned members of Miller's team are Minister of Education Jerzy Wiatr, head of the SdRP Warsaw organization, and Izabella Sierakowska who, similarly to Miller, relies on the ideologically sensitive electorate.

"Ideologists" seem to be winning domination in the SLD. New Council of Ministers Office Head Leszek Miller will decide who will receive appointments in the public administration. This may decrease the number of Oleksy's supporters. At the same time, leftist phraseology solidifies Miller's position in the OPZZ, the rank-and-file members of which do not want to yield initiatives to Solidarity and thus, insist that the government pursue a more leftist policy. OPZZ Deputy Chairman Stanislaw Wisniewski, former SLD deputy, warns that the Alliance will lose if it continues to slight social problems. This statement strengthens the position of Miller's group. Miller can meet the hopes of the trade unions' rank and file and of the political "midget"—the Polish Socialist Party.

In terms of platform principles, there are no differences between Oleksy's pragmatists and Kwasniewski's supporters. However, there are substantial differences between them and Miller's ideologists. The point is that the latter mostly rely on the electorate which demands a welfare state and at the same time, opposes the influence of the Church. What distinguishes the president's faction from the SdRP chief's faction is the tactic of fighting for power.

While Miller and Oleksy find it important to retain the SLD's unity and influence on the eve of parliamentary elections, Kwasniewski has a more withdrawn attitude toward current events.

The point is that "Kwasniewski's pragmatist faction in the SdRP" acts with an eye toward the presidential election in the year 2000. Kwasniewski is forming his retinue from people who are very close to him in both personal and generational terms. The group includes Jerzy Szmajdzinski and Marek Siwiec, as well those encountered by Kwasniewski in his political career—Jerzy Jaskiernia and Zbigniew Siemiatkowski—who was appointed by Kwasniewski as head of the "hottest" ministry (the Interior Ministry). However, the "watch" principle reigns in the SLD. Oleksy's man Andrzej Anklewicz, former chief of the prime minister's team of advisers, "watches" over Siemiatkowski, just as Miller "watches" over Cimoszewicz.

Squabbles are intensifying among SdRP factions, which has an impact on the alignment of forces within the SLD. The squabbles which subsided in the preelection period are currently being boosted by the "division of spoils." One argument concerns the filling of the post of Warsaw voivode. The current voivode is still in office due to the fact that the SLD factions led by the president, the party head, and the party's chief ideologist have failed to reach an agreement on this issue. Each SdRP faction is lobbying its own candidate and none is going to yield. The system in which the party ruled, the government governed, and the head of state reigned has not yet been restored—so far.

Poland: Air Defense Chief on Aviation Restructuring

WS1103143096 Warsaw POLSKA ZBROJNA in Polish 8 Mar 96 pp 1-2

[Interview with Major General Kazimierz Dziok, chief of the Polish Air and Air Defense Forces, by Apolinary Wojtys; place and date not given: "Military Aviation—Rising or Falling?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Wojtys] General, what will the Air and Air Defense Forces [WLOP] look like once they are restructured?

[Dziok] The basic targets of the restructuring are an improvement of the administration of all present and future battle assets and enhancing the system by strengthening the role of training. The integration of supervision over civilian and military aviation in Polish airspace in compliance with international standards is also very important.

As for organizational structures, two defense sectors are to be established within the Air Defense system: "South" and "North." In the air corps, a division-regiment system is to be replaced by a brigade-squadron system. We are planning to dissolve the 1st Air Defense Corps as well as several missile and air units by the year 2005. Reconnaissance aviation will be centered in one place. It is too early to speak about the details of this very intricate process.

[Wojtys] What are the advantages of the new organizational and structural solutions in the context of our entering NATO?

[Dziok] One of the assumptions of the reform of our Air Defense is adapting organizational structures and operational methods to the informational requirements of analogous systems in NATO states. The process of establishing air bases has also been launched. We are planning to subordinate the overhaul function to the Air Force Headquarters, which will undeniably lead to a compatibility of our structures to those of NATO. At a time when our Armed Forces are aspiring to join the West European security structures, this process is natural and necessary.

[Wojtys] What do you see as the major problems facing the restructuring of military aviation?

[Dziok] One of the most heatedly debated issues are staffing cuts within WLOP. A closer inspection, however, shows the problem is highly exaggerated. WLOP counts nearly 53,000 men, more than 24,000 of whom are professional cadres. Projections for the year 2005 provide for 41,500 men, yet once the forces are 50 percent professional, we will have approximately 20,800 posts for professional cadres.

Our records claim that nearly 22,000 professional soldiers are currently serving in the WLOP. This indicates that in the years 1996-2005, 1,000 posts will have to be vacated.

Yet by the year 2005 at least 1,700 professional soldiers will reach retirement age. Due to structural changes, this number might grow by a further 1,000-1,500 men. We must also remember that people leave the Armed Forces for other reasons as well.

Assuming that the annual inflow of graduates of military academies and enlisted men will remain fixed at the average level of 300 people, a simple calculation indicates that in 2005 we will have approximately 17,000 cadres, which means that we will have 4,000 professional soldiers less than predicted! That is why I claim that everyone will find a job at WLOP. Perhaps they will not get jobs in their home towns or in the same units, but as far as the cadres accept it, I see no problem. We have to realize that a soldier performs a duty and, therefore, he has to account for the fact that he might be required to move. No one should find that surprising.

I also wish to stress that the process of restructuring the Polish aviation system will be evolutionary rather than revolutionary.

[Wojtys] General, can Polish pilots ever fly as many hours as their counterparts in the West?

[Dziok] The number of hours flown by pilots annually is one of the major factors defining the advancement of pilot and combat training.

In the West, the annual rate is approximately 150-200 hours per pilot. As the performance of those pilots in armed conflicts shows, this is the optimal level.

In recent years the average annual flying time per pilot has been steadily falling and is now 40-60 hours. This is due to a fuel shortage, the diminishing overhaul life of aircraft, and a lack of financial resources for the procurement of indispensable spare parts. This state of affairs raises fears as to whether the training of pilots can be maintained at a level guaranteeing combat readiness and safety of flights.

In such a situation we are making indispensable organizational steps which involve, among other things, sending some pilots to foreign language courses. This is also necessary from the point of view of our aspirations regarding NATO; we must also not forget that our pilots very often take part in international exercises organized as part of the Partnership for Peace program. I realize that this is only a stopgap measure. To resolve this problem it is necessary to equip our air forces with state-of-the-art multifunction aircraft; these aircraft should be characterized by a sufficiently long overhaul life, which must guarantee pilots a sufficient amount of flying time, and be close to the level found in the Western air forces. However, everything depends on the budget.

We believe that a harbinger of better times is the fact that the "Warszawa" First Air Fighter Regiment has received more MiG-29 planes.

[Wojtys] For some time now there has been talk of "technical cannibalism" [scrapping aircraft for parts]; technical services are said to be involved in this due to necessity. Is this going to change?

[Dziok] As you have said, our technical services are engaged in so-called technical cannibalism because it is a necessity. In fact, it has allowed us to maintain the operating condition of our aircraft and helicopters on a decent level and to reduce costs related to the supply system. Let me draw your attention to the fact that even the Air Force of the United States use this method, which made it possible to circumvent costly ways of supplying the forces with spare parts; instead of the costly method, the Americans were able to use a much cheaper method—emergency supplies.

[Wojtys] What is the future of new Polish aircraft?

[Dziok] Right now the Polish aviation industry is manufacturing several products for our air forces: W-3 Sokol helicopters, as well as PZL-130 Orlik, An-28, and I-22 Iryda.

The product which is the closest to the European standard is the Sokol helicopter. As far as the Iryda plane is concerned, it is a very controversial issue; I have recently taken a tough stand on it and I will be adamant. Iryda must be improved according to our requirements and it should meet the expectations which we would like it to meet. One-to-one talks have already been made on this issue with representatives of the Mielec Transportation Equipment Plant and the Aviation Institute. Moreover, the demand for Orlik and Iryda is restricted by certain quantitative limits which are indispensable or the Polish Air forces; in light of this, the future of our manufacturers lies in the development of overhaul projects and cooperation with the manufacturers of future multifunction aircraft.

[Wojtys] What armaments will the Huzar helicopter be equipped with?

[Dziok] If we look at this from the point of view of the organization and position of combat helicopter regiments, this issue is not within the powers of WLOP.

However, the Huzar helicopter, as a government-sponsored project, may be further developed and may be used by the Armed Forces of the Polish Republic if the industry and the Development and Implementation Department speed up the choice of appropriate equipment. Brave decisions are needed here; it is necessary to stop cherishing illusions regarding the designed model and to adjust to the economic possibilities and to the needs regarding the Huzar helicopter.

[Wojtys] What about the ground forces support aviation? Is it already a partner of WLOP, or is it a problem for it?

[Dziok] I have never seen the ground forces support aviation as a problem. It it true, though, that inclusion of aviation units in the organizational structures of the ground forces did cause problems linked to training, for instance. At least at the beginning, this requires assistance from specialists of the WLOP Command Headquarters. The development of this kind of aviation is envisioned in the defense doctrine of the Polish Republic.

Partnership or a problem? I do not think that it is either of these. It is still too early for partnership, and the duty of providing assistance cannot be termed a problem.

[Wojtys] What are the top priorities which WLOP would like to see to first?

[Dziok] The highest priority in the Air Forces of the Polish Republic is flying safety. A very important issue is also maintenance of an appropriate level of the air force's ability to carry out combat and training tasks. Also, we are training another group of pilots on MiG-29 planes.

[Wojtys] Thank you for the interview.

Poland: Central Bank Head Interviewed

WS1303123896 Gdansk DZIENNIK BALTYCKI in Polish 16 Feb 96 p 3

[Interview with Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz, president of the National Bank of Poland, by Jan Kreft; place and date not given: "On Elections, Kolodko, Polish Banks"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Kreft] What are your reflections on your race in the presidential elections?

[Waltz] First and most importantly, it is very difficult to break up the existing political arrangements. While these arrangements may not be friendly to one another, they cannot function without one another; one lives on the other. I can say today that Lech Walesa's candidacy was written into the Democratic Left Alliance [SLD] scenario.

Someone who runs as a nonparty candidate has a very difficult road. One needs to have a stronger organizational structure at one's disposal, and it cannot be constructed on the run.

[Kreft] After the parliamentary elections in 1993, the coalition wanted very much to control the Supreme Chamber of Control [NIK] and the National Bank of Poland [NBP]. Do you still feel any pressure zeroing in on changes in the NBP?

[Waltz] Institutions whose heads have fixed terms of office are not so easily affected by political bargaining.

The NBP Is One of the Institutions That Should Not Take Part in Dividing the Spoils

[Kreft] SLD and Polish Peasant Party [PSL] deputies presented a motion to introduce a supervisory board for the NBP.

[Waltz] I cannot think of shortening my term. It would mean that the law is retroactive, but I am expecting actions curbing the NBP president's powers. Yet, I would be very apprehensive about a situation where banking supervision would come into the sphere of political divisions.

[Kreft] How do you assess the situation of Polish banks?

[Waltz] The situation is under control, although in 1992-93 we were threatened with a domino effect, which happened in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia.

[Kreft] What does that mean?

[Waltz] It means bankruptcies entailing subsequent collapses. A few years ago, the number of banks that got into trouble was rapidly rising. We had no idea how quickly the situation would be deteriorating. Fortunately, we bottomed out, which does not mean that we do not have malfunctioning banks anymore. They are bound to be liquidated or go bankrupt unless capital is furnished. There is still quite a long way to go to reach stability. Yet the banks feel an improvement; we have introduced, among other things, a sound principle that banks stockholders can borrow not more than 5 percent of their own bank funds. Before that, banks were established in order to finance their owners' business ventures.

[Kreft] Several trillion old zlotys [Z] have been spent on the reform of the banking system. Wasn't it too costly?

[Waltz] I think not. The price of a deep crisis in the banking sector would have been a crisis of the whole economy. Banks would have lost credibility with their clients, who would have been afraid to put their money in them. Today, owing to the reform, there is a greater propensity among the people to save.

In the past few years, about 200 cooperative and three stockholding banks—Agrobank, Posnania, and Animex—have collapsed. Many escaped bankruptcy thanks only to rescue operations; such was the case of Lodzki Bank Rozwoju [LBR], the First Commercial Bank, and Prosper Bank. Rescuing state banks, together with the Bank for Food Economy [BGZ], cost Z40 trillion; the private ones cost about Z6 trillion. I think it was worth paying the money.

[Kreft] Will you seek support of foreign capital in the recovery of Polish banks?

[Waltz] We are happy that such concerns as Daewoo and General Electric are interested in banks, the more so since they are interested in small capital banks. These investors are guided primarily by the good indicators of our economy. The indicators are clear signals to them, although I know that the growth is not yet felt by the average Pole.

[Kreft] How do you assess [Finance Minister] Grzegorz Kolodko's "2000 Package"?

[Waltz] It is good that such a program exists and looks to the future. But I see a certain incoherence there. I think that some indicators in the package describing the condition of the economy in the coming years are too optimistic. The assumptions of large-scale economic growth each year do not make allowances for fluctuating market situations in the world's economy, whose growth most probably will not be at the present pace. In the meantime, Polish foreign trade is strictly related to the world's market situation; thus, our exports will not be a driving force of economic growth, as it has been until now.

Another incoherence is that, if investment in Poland is to stimulate economic growth, it must be accompanied by big imports. If this really happens, then, after a few years, we will face the necessity of devaluing the zloty. But I am very happy about the forecast to reduce the budget deficit and taxes.

[Kreft] Do you believe inflation will drop below 6 percent in four years?

[Waltz] One-digit inflation is possible in the year 2000, but I am doubtful about whether it can go under 6 percent. The inflation rate depends on the reform of the social insurance system, not only on monetary policy, exports, investment, and other economic factors.

The Sejm has stated that we must try to reduce inflation to a 17-percent rate. I said yes, but not with this economic growth. Last year, the NBP was mistaken slightly, not tinkering at making inflation higher, which the finance minister imputed to us.

The credibility of the central bank is also important to us. Therefore, we forecast a higher inflation rate than the one forecast by the finance minister, although we will do our best to ensure that does not happen.

[Kreft] Do you feel you are Grzegorz Kolodko's ally?

[Waltz] I am an ally of those actions that zero in on the reduction of inflation and maintenance of economic growth, no matter which minister takes these subjects on—on one condition, though: that these are actions and not merely nice declarations on paper. When the "Strategy for Poland" was being drafted, we did not criticize it, and I supposed many political parties would subscribe to it. Meanwhile, not all of its elements have been implemented.

[Kreft] You mentioned some conspicuous omissions in the "Strategy for Poland." Do you subscribe to the opinion that the reform of the social insurance system, as well as other unpopular, although necessary, decisions are being postponed for the future by the coalition?

[Waltz] They were surely postponed due to the presidential election. According to the "Strategy," this reform should have begun with the new year. Parliamentary elections will be held soon. Will the coalition have enough guts to make unpopular decisions? I have no idea.

[Kreft] Meanwhile, you are waging a battle with NIK.

[Waltz] NIK wants to have its postaudit successes published. It also happens that, after the postaudit recommendations are signed, the final report contains different data. Such was the case with Bank Slaski and the audit of the reform of the banking system. We signed the postaudit recommendations without hesitation, and later it turned out that the report contained false data and revealed names of banks.

[Kreft] How do you size up the privatization of the Bank Gdanski [BG]? Could one have privatized the BG without BIG [Bank of Economic Initiatives] involvement?

[Waltz] It would have been more difficult.

[Kreft] A few years back, BIG was a small bank. After the NBP engaged in the reform of the LBR, BIG became the leading banking power. What was the NBP's role in that process?

[Waltz] The NBP did not take part in it.

[Kreft] During your election campaign, you did not use such smooth figures of speech as the "red web" in describing the world of economy. Did you not see it, or perhaps you thought it did not exist?

It has turned out that the "red web" is present in the insurance sector rather than in the banking one; only BIG was mentioned as a Polisa [an insurance company set up by excommunists] stockholder.

[Waltz] The banking sector employs people from both Solidarity and the PZPR [Polish United Workers Party].

I personally expect that an elite of technocrats, who do not care about politics, will emerge soon. We already have the first examples of such people taking the post of presidents of the largest banks, as in the case of the BS.

[Kreft] Will the enfranchisement referendum have any influence on the Polish banks?

[Waltz] I do not think so.

[Kreft] Do you regard as favorable the transfer of bank assets owned by the State Treasury to the needs of enfranchisement?

[Waltz] Yes, I do. The present forms of privatization are worn out, and banks can be appropriate entities for massive enfranchisement.

[Kreft] Are you goping to take part in the referendum?

[Waltz] Yes, I am.

[Kreft] How will you vote?

[Waltz] I will not say. [passage omitted]

Romania: 'Rapprochement' in Talks With Hungary

AU1403112796 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 2000 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday and today, in Budapest, experts of the Romanian and Hungarian Ministries of Foreign Affairs held a first round of negotiations on the basic political treaty to be concluded by the two countries.

Following the launching in August of last year of President Ion Iliescu's proposal calling for an historic Romanian-Hungarian reconciliation, the current round of talks, during which they tackled the text of the basic political treat, is the first at the level of experts.

During his weekly news conference today, Sorin Ducaru, spokesman for the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, stated that that the negotiations had been resumed practically from the point they had been left at last year in July, when Foreign Ministers Teodor Melescanu and Laszlo Kovacs presented in Bucharest the proposals of the Romanian as well as Hungarian parties intended to surmount controversy about [Council of Europe] Recommendation 1201.

[Begin Ducaru recording] Yesterday the two delegations presented modified variants of the proposals they made last year, acting from their wish to draw closer to the stance of the other negotiating party, and they discussed in great detail these new formulations. Both delegations found that this new wording of the document contributes to a rapprochement between the two positions.

However, the most controversial issue continues to be the text of the joint interpretation of Recommendation 1201. Thus, although a rapprochement is to be noted to a certain extent, they have still not reached the final convergence point.

Besides this, the Romanian delegation also presented new formulations for several other paragraphs of the basic treaty article referring to the rights of persons belonging to ethnic minorities. The Hungarian party is to examine these new proposals, after which they will discuss them during the next meeting of the expert delegation, the precise date of which is to be established via diplomatic channels.

Regarding the perspectives for these negotiations, the Romanian party is resolved to continue doing everything that depends on it so that the basic treaty with Hungary can be finalized before the end of this year, and signed during a visit at the highest level. [end recording]

Romania: Dispute in Hungarian Union Over Nominee

LD1303123396 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 0600 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] There is no split within the Hungarian Democratic Union of Romania [UDMR] after a stormy meeting [in Miercurea Ciuc] during the weekend, according to a statement issued by the office of the honorary chairman [Laszlo Tokes].

Laszlo Tokes and [UDMR Chairman] Bela Marko clashed, among other things, over the nomination of Geza Szocs to the board of trustees of [Hungarian] Duna Television. Peter Marvanyi reports from Marosvasarhely [Tirgu Mures]:

[Marvanyi] The statement analyzes everything that happened at the meeting and says that the UDMR council of representatives agreed with Tokes and his followers regarding practically every question although the body did not vote over the disputed matters.

According to the statement, Laszlo Borbely should voluntarily resign [as liaison deputy between the UDMR and Romanian parties in the run-up to the local authority elections]. The statement of the honorary chairman's office specifically objects to the fact that UDMR parliamentary deputies and senators earlier supported Marko in protesting the appointment of Geza Szocs to the supervisory committee of Duna Television's board of trustees. The statement calls on the deputy and senate groups to change this decision and stresses that only the oppressive power can win from the enlargement of conflicts within the UDMR.

Meanwhile, Bela Marko convened the UDMR's operative council, a body which has to make decisions in particularly difficult or perhaps crisis situations for the following week. According to observers, on this occasion they will try to settle the conflict which broke out in Csikszereda [Miercurea Ciuc].

Romania: Officials Discuss Openness of Institutions

AU1303094996 Bucharest ZIUA in Romanian 1 Mar 96 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] [Report by Razvan Savaliuc and Cristian Botez on statements by various officials attending seminar on "Transparency of Security and the Security of Transparency" held in Bucharest on 29 February: "A Minister Who Lies to the Public Should Not Pay With his Head"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The TACTIC Logistics Center, financed by the European Community, organized a seminar on 29 February on the issue "Transparency of Security and the Security of Transparency" at 6 Donici Street in Bucharest. The meeting was attended by Defense Minister Gheorghe Tinca, Senators Vasile Vacaru and Kiraly Szabo, members of the commission in charge of the SRI [Romanian Intelligence Service], as well as spokespersons of the SRI and of the Interior Ministry. For three hours, the representatives of those in power struggled to convince journalists that the aforementioned institutions are transparent, and they correctly inform the public about the activities they carry out. While discussing the matter, they even praised the ministers of the Vacaroiu Cabinet, finding excuses for their "small inadequacies" that appear in their public statements when they misinform the public because of "job-related interest." On this occasion, Minster Tinca launched a new concept called the "job-related lie," meant to absolve from responsibility the dignitaries who misinform the taxpayers.

The Defense Minster Brought Up the Issue of the "Hungarian Danger"

Before European Community representative Karen Fogg, who came to report on the degree of informational transparency of the state's fundamental institutions, National Defense Minister Gheorghe Tinca, disturbed by a query addressed to him by a journalist from Hungary, said that many Romanians are afraid of Hungarians, stressing that the Hungarian extremists are much stronger and sophisticated than the Romanian ones. Nevertheless, the head of the Ministry of National Defense [MApN] assured the audience that Hungary is a military force from which we have nothing to fear, if it is alone.

Vacaru Described How He "Admonished a Journalist"

The president of the Commission in charge of control of SRI activity, Vasile Vacaru, who barely arrived from an accountability meeting of a SRI unit in charge of pursuit and investigation, said that in Romania anybody can say the truth. Vacaru tweaked the journalists' ears, accusing them of being unable to obtain the desired information from the SRI because they do not know how to ask questions: "I admonished a journalist to whom I said: Go and learn how to ask questions. Last time, I banned the journalists' access to the Commission because a girl asked me: Why did you call me here?" Minister Tinca jumped to Vacaru's defense saying: "It is neither your nor our fault, but the fault of our ignorance."

Gheorghe Dragos of the Ministry of the Interior Wished To Make a Sensational Disclosure About Stefan cel Mare's Fleet

The representative of the Ministry of the Interior Lieutenant Colonel Gheorghe Dragos launched the concept of "military press" enumerating dozens of publications by the Ministry of the Interior distributed throughout our country's counties. Asked about the balance sheet of the UM 0215, the military unit of the Ministry of the Interior that is investigating all cases of corrupt policeman, Lt. Col. Gheorghe Dragos mentioned a radio program in which General Dan Gheorghe, the commander of UM 0215 made public the balance sheet of that unit. In reality, only a little data has been disclosed in the respective radio program. The Ministry of the Interior representative said that his ministry is transparent: "We have a page on topical issues in the daily EVENIMENTUL ZILEI." To this statement, Senator Kiraly Szabo retorted that all that is left now is for the MApN and the SRI to have a page of their own in the respective publication, and then Ion Cristoiu [EVENIMENTUL ZILEI director] will be left without a job. Lt. Col. Dragos mentioned to the journalists a sensational disclosure connected with Stefan cel Mare's [15th c. Moldovan ruler] fleet and its incursions in Constantinople.

Ulieru Admitted He Has SRI Members Infiltrated in Various Editorial Offices

SRI spokesman Nicolae Ulieru stressed his institution's transparency also through the fact that in his office "journalists can come in freely and always find coffee and bread." Ulieru, disturbed by the fact that some journalists left the hall just as he took the floor, admitted that there are journalists in some editorial offices who are nothing but SRI agents. Ulieru motivated the need for them by the fact that the SRI could not establish normal contacts with all editorial offices and that the institution in which he works does not have enough funds to support a favorable publicity company.

Gheorghe Tinca Invited Sorin Rosca Stanescu To Join a Hunting Party

The director of daily ZIUA, Sorin Rosca Stanescu was invited to tell his opinion of the habits of blocking media access to information practiced by spokespersons from some state institutions. Rosca Stanescu expressed dissatisfaction with the degree of transparency of the institutions invited to the seminar, saying that the Army has still made the most significant progress in this respect. He stressed the fact that many of the errors committed by journalists are caused by dignitaries who either lie or hide information: "In Romania, there is no system of protection against dignitaries' lies. There is no law of ministerial responsibility. Ministers can say what they want without anybody calling them to account for it." Rosca Stanescu gave as an example Justice Minister Iosif Gavril Chiuzbaian, who recently misinformed the public when he stated he was not notified in any way by General Pitulescu [head of the General Police Inspectorate] about the corruption in the area of justice. Minister Tinca defended Chiuzbaian saying that the deed of the accused minister was only a "job-related lie. Why should he pay with his head for it?" Gheorghe Tinca also said that the subject of the seminar needs at least one day of debates and proposed that it be resumed at some other time in a larger hall. Upon leaving, the minister of defense stopped Sorin Rosca Stanescu and, showing his good intentions and his willingness for dialogue, invited him to join in a hunting party.

Romania: Police Seize Uranium, Secret Files

AU1303170196 Bucharest ADEVARUL in Romanian 8 Mar 96 p 1

[Article by P.M.: "86 Kg Uranium and a File With Secret Documents"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Officers of the Anti-Organized Crime Service of the Timis County Police Inspectorate have discovered a car with Caras-Severin plates carrying 82 kg of radioactive material. Specialized laboratory analyses revealed that what was found in the car's luggage was uranium, with a gamma radiation level 20 times the normal one. The car, which was stopped by police near the town of Deta, was being driven by foreman Andrei Ilie, aged 46, an employee with the Oravita Mining Corporation; his passenger was pensioner Nicolae Borceanu.

In the car carrying the uranium, the police also found a file with secret documents belonging to the Magurele Research and Design Center for Radioactive Metals, situated near Bucharest. According to the statements of the two suspects, the documents were stolen by Andrei Ilie from the Banatul Mining Company of Oravita, Caras-Severin County. Each of the pages in the file were to be taken to a certain location, where a man whose identity has not yet been ascertained was going to photocopy them in exchange for 10 million lei.

Slovenia: Finance Ministry Rejects FRY Bank Accusations

AU1303175096 Ljubljana Radio Slovenia Network in Slovene 1430 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Slovene Finance Ministry today stated that the accusations by the Yugoslav National Bank and some other Serbian banks that with its financial agreement with foreign commercial banks on paying a part of the former Yugoslav debt Slovenia is violating the foreign banks' regulations are completely unfounded. The Serbian threat of a court procedure is intended to undermine agreement between our state and creditor banks. Unlike Slovene banks, since 1992 the Serbian banks have not repaid a single dollar to foreign banks nor have they shown any will to do so, the statement issued by the Finance Ministry says.

Slovenia: Drnovsek To Ask Paris To Support Rapid EU Entry

BR1403100596 Paris LES ECHOS in French 13 Mar 96 p 4

[Report on interview with Slovenian Prime Minister Janez Drnovsek by LES ECHOS Special Envoy Stephane Dupont in Ljubljana; date not given: "Janez Drnovsek: Slovenia Is Ready To Abandon the Association Agreement With the European Union"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ljubljana—The details of Slovenia's accession to the European Union will be the focus of talks starting in Paris today between the Slovenian prime minister and the leaders of the French Government. During his first official visit to France, Janez Drnovsek will make a case for his country's rapid entry into the Union and call for the consolidation of French-Slovenian economic and trade links.

"I will ask the French Government to exert renewed pressure on the Italian authorities to finally sign the association agreement concluded between Slovenia and the Fifteen," he said in an interview given to LES ECHOS just before leaving for Paris. Rome is blocking the entry into force of the text, initialed one year ago, in order to gain the upper hand in a quarrel dating back to 1994: At the instigation of the neofascists, Rome is claiming preemptive rights for its citizens' reacquisition of real estate that is now Slovenian property, but which belonged to the Italians until 1945 prior to the annexation of Istria. Ljubljana will not hear of it. "The people whose property was taken received compensation after the treaties of Osimo and Rome were signed by Yugoslavia and Italy in 1975 and 1983, respectively . In 1992, after the Yugoslav Federation collapsed, the Italian Government recognized the validity of these agreements. It is a closed book," Drnovsek explained in French.

The Slovenians find the Italian pretensions all the more difficult to accept in that they primarily have an election flavor—the dispute concerns 400 houses and apartments. "Rome is abusing its position to indulge in blackmail," within the Union, Drnovsek complained. "It does not bode well for the future of Europe to tolerate this kind of behavior," he added somewhat bitterly. Admittedly, his government has not received much support in the various European capitals, which have little desire to clash with Rome. So he will be using the next few days to convince Paris to plead Slovenia's case to Italy on this matter. Two weeks ago, Michel Barnier, the French European affairs minister visited Rome and Ljubljana in an attempt to sort out the dispute. Apparently with little success.

It is no easy task. Italy is in the middle of an election campaign. A time more favorable for emergent nationalism than for making unpopular decisions. And Slovenia is preparing for a general election at the end of the year. At the moment the Slovenian Government seems tempted to harden its position. "If the situation has not improved in one or two months, we shall abandon the association agreement and apply for direct membership to the Union. We have already waited too long. This possibility has already been discussed with Brussels. I shall also raise it during my stay in Paris," Drnovsek warned. The entry into force of the association agreement "will not change much for Slovenia." In fact, since gaining independence in 1991 it has tried to adapt its legislation and economy to European standards at breakneck speed, seriously reducing its protective customs provisions. "Agreement or no agreement, we shall continue these efforts to join the European Union," the Slovenian prime minister assured us.

Boosting Trade

In spite of the Italian veto, "Slovenia has indeed doubled its efforts to come closer to the Fifteen over the past year," one European diplomat posted to Ljubljana said. "Today it is the country in central and Eastern Europe that has made the most progress in integrating into the Union," he added.

Janez Drnovsek also intends to use his visit to Paris to try and inject some dynamism into French-Slovenian trade. For while Paris is the fourth-largest supplier [of products] to Slovenia (after Germany, Italy, and Austria), with 3.5 billion [currency not specified] in exports, its market share (8.3 percent in 1994), is half as important as that of Bonn or Rome. Above all, owing to the location of Renault and Citroen facilities in the country, automobiles and spare parts account for 70 percent of French sales. Apart from automobiles, French exporters, who have tended to neglect this market comprised of 2 million inhabitants, are hardly represented at all.

"That is a mistake," one expert maintained: "With a per capita income of $7,000, Slovenia has the greatest purchasing power of all Eastern European countries." All the more so since in its attempt to escape from the hold exerted on it by Germany and Italy, Ljubljana is seeking to diversify its sources of supply, leaving an opportunity for French firms that Janez Drnovsek will not fail to hammer home this week.

Federal

FRY: Defense Minister Leaves for China

LD1303222596 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1915 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, Mar 13 (TANJUG)—A delegation of Federal Republic of Yugoslavia headed by Defense Minister Pavle Bulatovic left Wednesday for a several-day official visit to the People's Republic of China.

Bulatovic said before departure he was certain the visit would be mutually useful.

Bulatovic will discuss with his host General Chi Haotian, defense minister and vice-president of the Central Military Commission, the prospects for promoting cooperation in military-economic, scientific, technical, defense and security fields.

Yugoslav minister will also visit some Chinese Army units, give a conference on Yugoslavia's defense system at the defense university, and is expected to be received by top Chinese officials.

FRY: Ministry Statement on Multinovic's Visit to Zagreb

LD1203135296 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 2250 GMT 11 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Zagreb, 11 Mar (TANJUG)—In Zagreb today Milan Milutinovic, foreign minister of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia [FRY], and Mate Granic, deputy prime minister and foreign minister of Croatia, conducted wide-ranging talks on issues of importance for advancing the peace process and normalizing relations, the FRY Foreign Ministry said in a press statement this evening.

The visit marks the continuation of contacts and the political dialogue initiated during Minister Granic's recent visit to the FRY.

The talks were held in a constructive atmosphere, and both sides expressed an interest in and readiness to work toward full normalization of relations, fully aware of the importance the normalization will have for consolidating the peace process and for peace and stability in the region as a whole.

The two sides expressed common interests in cooperation with other international players in implementing the peace agreement on Bosnia-Herzegovina and the basic agreement on Slavonia-Baranja region.

The importance was stressed of the need to speed up the implementation of the civilian aspects of the peace agreement on Bosnia and to secure conditions as soon as possible for free and democratic elections within the existing deadline.

The importance was also stressed of the need to embark as soon as possible on the economic recovery and reconstruction of Bosnia-Herzegovina. They were described as being of both economic and political significance.

Both sides stressed the need to fully respect the principle of equal treatment of all the sides in implementing the peace agreement.

The reconstruction of the areas destroyed in the war, the creation of a situation in which people will be able to normalize their lives, and the return of refugees will make valuable contribution to peace, providing there are no political preconditions and that all sides are given an equal treatment.

As for the Srem-Baranja region, the need was stressed for the consistent and comprehensive implementation of the basic agreement of 12 November 1995 and the UN Security Council Resolution 1037 of 15 January 1996.

The importance was stressed of the need to complete the deployment of UNTAES [UN Transitional Administration in Eastern Slavonia] forces as soon as possible and to ensure the functioning of the transitional administration as a guarantee that the transitional period will proceed smoothly and that all the people in the area will be treated equally. Both sides voiced their full support for the UN transitional administration and its administrator, Mr. Jacques Klein.

The issues of Prevlaka and the access to sea for the [Bosnian] Serb Republic were also discussed. The Yugoslav side's view was that controversial issues should be tackled in the spirit of good-neighborliness and in line with the existing agreements.

Until the definite solution is found, in other words until the FRY and the Republic of Croatia, acting in line with the UN Security Council resolution 1038 of 15 January 1996, agree on a solution that would help to overcome their difference over Prevlaka in a peaceful way, the security system as installed by the United Nations in line with the joint declarations by the presidents of the FRY and the Republic of Croatia of 30 September and 20 October 1992, and the UN Security Council Resolution 779 of 6 October 1992 will remain in force.

A number of concrete agreements were reached during the talks which, by taking the account of common interests, will help in resolving significant concrete issues. Agreements were signed on reopening the [Adriatic] oil pipeline, resuming railway transport, restoring air traffic, and reestablishing telecommunications and some postal services.

An agreement was reached in principle to reopen the Belgrade-Zagreb motorway. The ways of enforcing the latter agreement will be outlined shortly.

An agreement was also reached to expand the powers of the office of the FRY Government in Zagreb and of the office of the Croatian Government in Belgrade to included certain consular functions. By this decision the two sides will meet the imperatives of everyday life and the interests of the citizens of both countries, especially of the large number of Serb refugees [from Croatia] in the FRY. This will also help in dealing with their status and other issues.

The agreements reached are based on relevant international conventions and customs and will inevitably give new dimension to the powers of the two offices but without raising the issue of formal normalization of relations between the two countries.

As far as other outstanding issues are concerned, both sides reaffirmed that they were prepared to continue negotiations at expert level in order to achieve a mutually acceptable solution as soon as possible.

The Yugoslav side expressed its support for the full protection of Croatian Serbs' civil and human rights. It particularly stressed the need to create conditions for the unhindered and secure return of all Serb refugees and expelled people from Krajina and western Slavonia. The principle of voluntary choice of the place of residence for all refugees must be respected.

Special reference was made to protecting and guaranteeing property rights of Serb refugees as well as FRY citizens who possess property in Croatia. The Yugoslav side delivered an aide-memoire with proposals for the resolution of this very significant issue.

The results of the activities of the two governments' commissions for humanitarian issues and missing persons were assessed as positive and support was extended for its further work based on agreed principles, without politicizing. The signing of a harmonized protocol on the further cooperation between the commissions is pending.

The talks were attended by Zoran Vujovic, federal minister for transport and communications, and senior officials of the Yugoslav Foreign Ministry. The Croatian side was also represented by Zeljko Luzavec, maritime, transport, and communications minister, and senior officials of the Croatian Foreign Ministry.

Milutinovic was also received by Croatian President Franjo Tudjman. They discussed the basic aspects of current Yugoslav-Croatian relations.

They agreed that these relations were of great importance for further progress in the peace process and for consolidation of peace and stability in the region. As for the future and good-neighborly relations, the two sides said that it was necessary to invest additional efforts toward confidence-building and settling the outstanding issues of interest to both sides through negotiations.

During the visit Milutinovic met representatives of Croatian Serbs in the bureau of the FRY Government [in Zagreb] and held lengthy and detailed talks with them.

FRY: Minister Meets With Iranian Charge d'Affaires

LD1303232096 Belgrade TANJUG in English 2108 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 13 (TANJUG)—Yugoslav Minister without Portfolio Margit Savovic met here Wednesday [13 March] with Charge d'Affaires of the Iranian Embassy in Yugoslavia Seyed Ahmad Hedayat.

The two sides discussed the results of the implementation of the Dayton peace agreement for Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Hope was expressed that the Dayton agreement will bring a lasting peace to the territory of the former Yugoslavia and a wish that the estimated two million refugees will return home.

Hedayat conveyed to Savovic, a minister in charge of minority rights, a message from women's rights adviser to the Iranian president Shahla Habibi.

FRY: FRY, Argentina To Intensify Political Dialogue

LD1303114896 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1032 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, Mar 12 (TANJUG)—Officials of the Foreign Ministries of Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Republic of Argentina expressed readiness Tuesday in Belgrade to intensify political dialogue and the promotion of traditionally friendly bilateral relations, Yugoslav Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

Yugoslav side was headed by Deputy Foreign Minister Zivadin Jovanovic and Argentinean by Foreign Ministry Undersecretary Guillermo Enrique Gonzales.

The officials expressed both countries' interest in developing bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

FRY: TANJUG on FYROM Joining NACC

LD1303114596 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1030 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Brussels, Mar 12 (TANJUG)—The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) was admitted into the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, it was officially announced Tuesday in Brussels.

A decision in this regard was taken Monday at an extraordinary meeting of the NATO Council at ambassadorial level.

After joining Partnership for Peace, FYROM has thus crossed another threshold in its endeavors for joining NATO as a permanent member.

The North Atlantic Cooperation Council was created in 1991 after the Warsaw Pact was dissolved and its former members were invited to cooperate through Partnership for Peace.

The council is envisaged as an important factor for supporting NATO's eastward expansion policy. It comprises the foreign ministers of the 16 NATO member-states and of another 28 countries (with FYROM), including those in Central and Eastern Europe and all states which emerged from the former Soviet Union except Russia.

Among the states that emerged from the former Yugoslav Federation, the council has so far admitted Slovenia and FYROM.

FRY: Kontic Chairs Talks on Consolidating FRY Debt

LD1303225796 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1429 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Belgrade, 13 Mar (TANJUG)—The Yugoslav Federal Government's commission for monitoring the international conference on former Yugoslavia met today, with Prime Minister Radoje Kontic in the chair. It discussed the program of consolidating and restructuring the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia [FRY] foreign debt, the Federal Secretariat for Information announced today.

The commission spoke in positive terms about the work so far in resolving the problem of the FRY's foreign indebtedness, and accepted in principle the assessment submitted as a sound basis for drafting the final document of the strategy to be adopted in talks with foreign creditors, primarily the IMF and the World Bank.

The Federal Government commission for monitoring the international conference on former Yugoslavia advised the government to set up a delegation as soon as possible which, on the basis of the officially adopted strategy, would conduct negotiations on restructuring, refinancing, and reprogramming the FRY's foreign debts with foreign creditors, the Federal Secretariat for Information said in its statement.

Serbia

Serbia: Opposition Favors Normalizing Ties to Croatia

LD1303184296 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1523 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 13 (TANJUG)—The opposition Democratic Party of Serbia and the Civic Alliance Party favour the normalization of relations between Yugoslavia and Croatia.

Leader of the Democratic Party of Serbia Vojislav Kostunica said on Wednesday [13 March] that the Yugoslav-Croatian relations had to be normalized, but that the question of the status of the remaining Serbs in Croatia had to be opened.

Kostunica told a news conference that mostly elderly Serbs remained in Croatia and that they were in a difficult position. He said that this issue had not been discussed in the Monday talks between foreign ministers Milan Milutinovic of Yugoslavia and Mate Granic of Croatia.

Kostunica said that his party supported the normalization of the countries' economic relations, but only 'to the extent which is in the interest of the Serbian economy.'

Civic Alliance President Vesna Pesic on Wednesday welcomed the continuation of talks between Belgrade and Zagreb and said that the process of normalizing relations between Yugoslavia and Croatia was slow.

Speaking at another news conference, Pesic said that it was still not clear when the mutual recognition of the two states would take place.

Serbia: Marjanovic, French Telecommunications Company Meet

LD1303224596 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1946 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 13 (TANJUG)—Serbian Premier Mirko Marjanovic on Wednesday [13 March] received a delegation of the world's leading telecommunications company Alcatel of France, headed by Alcatel-Telecom President Gerard Degas.

The Serbian Information Ministry said in a statement that the delegation had informed Marjanovic about the details of the Tuesday agreement between Alcatel and Serbia's post and telecommunications company.

The parties agreed on the delivery of one million of state-of-the-art telephone lines in the next few years. Alcatel and its Yugoslav partners, the electronic industry of the southern Serbian town of Nis and the Pupin holding corporation, should establish 300,000 lines by the end of this year.

The statement quoted Marjanovic as saying that this was one of the most important Serbian development projects and that the agreement was a giant step into the 21st century in the field of telecommunications.

In view of other Alcatel's lines of business, wide possibilities are opening for the promotion of the Yugoslav-French economic cooperation and joining the world's leading technological trends, the statement said.

Montenegro

Montenegro: Port of Bar To Provide 'Temporary' Naval Base

AU1203163796 Belgrade BORBA in Serbo-Croatian 9-10 Mar 96 p 3

[Report by B. Pejovic: "A Part of the Coast for the Navy"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Federal Defense Minister Pavle Bulatovic, aide of the chief of Navy General Staff Rear Admiral Vlade Nonkovic, and commander of the Navy Rear Admiral Milan Zec visited the port of Bar yesterday.

Having made an overview of the port, the federal defense minister and navy representatives were briefed on the capacities, plans, and prospects for development. In the talks the so far, the very successful cooperation between the navy and Bar port was mentioned as was a mutual readiness to improve cooperation in the future. The navy is ready to provide facilities that can be commercially used for the needs of Bar port. They agreed in principal on the use of a stretch of the operative coast of Bar port as a temporary base to accommodate part of the navy's fleet.

Montenegro: Liberals Criticize TV Over Elections

AU1203165996 Podgorica MONITOR in Serbo-Croatian 8 Mar 96 p 6

[Report by T.K.: "Stojovic's Alert Television Machine"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The young Liberals of Niksic (organization within the Liberal Alliance of Montenegro) are not having much luck with the local television. Recently they tried to get a public statement out for the first time, but it did not get past Stojovic's TV machine. In a statement that they sent to RTV Niksic, they protested the takeover of television frequencies used to pick up the first and second channels of RAI, where one can now "enjoy" Televizija Niksic and the third channel of TV Crna Gora [Montenegro Television].

The young Liberals believe that this has closed "the only window to the world" for them and they regard the explanation by the director of Televizija Crne Gore, that the frequencies of the Italian channels had to be filled by domestic production so as not to be taken away, as an routine preelection trick, which, their statement says, indicates that the elections will be extremely unfair. This conclusion was enough for the conscientious editors of Televizija Niksic to "arrest" their statement since, as Vera Djurkovic, deputy chief of legal and financial affairs of RTV Niksic, explained to the young Liberals, this is nothing more or less than a violation of the Montenegrin Constitution and a violation of the law on information! The representatives of the young Liberals wanted such a serious violation explained to them by RTV Niksic director Milan Stojovic, but he could not receive them because he had "guests" all that day.

It is interesting that the end of the transmitting of the very popular Italian television station almost coincided with the start of the broadcasting of an Italian language course on Montenegrin morning television! The inventive television editors seem to be trying to convince the viewers that a copy is better than the original.

Kosovo

Kosovo: Rugova Urges Sweden To Open Office in Pristina

AU1303133596 Pristina KOSOVA DAILY REPORT in English 11 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President of the Republic of Kosova, Dr. Ibrahim Rugova, received today (Monday) [11 March] in Prishtina Gofran Jacobsson, charge d'affaires, and Mr. Jonas Weiss, second secretary of the Swedish Embassy in Belgrade.

President Rugova briefed the Swedish diplomats on the current state of affairs in Kosova, pointing out that the Serbia regime's systematic repression makes the situation permanently tense. However, President Rugova said, the people of Kosova, in spite of the repression, is committed to peaceful means and dialogue in its movement for independence and democracy. Kosova, an independent and neutral state, is a political will of its people expressed in the referendum, President Rugova emphasized.

President of the Republic of Kosova appreciated the engagement of Sweden in the Kosova issue, and urged the Swedish Government to increase its presence in Kosova through establishing an office in Prishtina.

The Swedish diplomats expressed the concern of their government about the situation in Kosova. Sweden will continue to closely watch the situation and developments in Kosova they said.

Kosovo: Draskovic's Statements Called 'Absurd'

AU1303135396 Pristina KOSOVA DAILY REPORT in English 11 Mar 96

["Ridiculous Statement by Draskovic: 'Serbs Were the First Victims of JNA'"—KOSOVA DAILY REPORT headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Three Serbian opposition parties organized Saturday, 9 March, a rally in Belgrade to mark the fifth anniversary of the 9 March 1991 demonstrations against President Milosevic of Serbia's regime.

Vuk Draskovic, the Serbian Renewal Party (SPO) leader, the leading nationalist party in Serbia, said in his address the 1991 demonstrations in the Serbian capital will be the best evidence to deny accusations that the Serbs waged the outrageous war in the former Yugoslavia in early 1990s! In a clear attempt to extenuate the Serbs for all the atrocities and crimes in Kosova, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, Vuk Draskovic accused the former Yugoslavia's Army, the notorious JNA, of having firstly targeted the "youth and citizens of Belgrade" on 9 March 1991, asserting that the first victims by the JNA tanks in the former Yugoslavia fell that day in Belgrade.

The SPO leader has a short memory. The Serbian ("Yugoslav") police and military hordes stained their hands with blood in Kosova two years earlier—in March 1989 and January 1990. The JNA tanks took to the Kosova streets and killed Albanian youth and citizens at the behest of the Belgrade authorities and the blessing of the Serbian citizens. As many as 70 Albanians, including children, were killed then.

The JNA started its deadly march in March 1989 at the time of Serbian forcible changes to the Kosova Constitution, resulting in the illegal suspension of Kosova's autonomy, when this was celebrated in the Belgrade streets with champagne. The Belgrade citizens reveled in song and dances then.

A similar march was reenacted in January 1990 in Kosova. JNA soldiers shot Albanians in cold blood. The Serbian officer's shooting of Fadil Talla in the town of Podujeva [Podujevo], the shooting and wounding of two youngsters at Janjeva, were such instances.

There is no need whatsoever to refer to the crimes and atrocities the Yugoslav Army committed in Croatia and Bosnia. They have become too familiar to all by now.

Vuk Draskovic's absurd statements sound hollow in view of all this. Does anybody believe in such a political marketing of the Serbian opposition? Who can believe in a refashioned "democratic image" of Vuk Draskovic, one of the authors of the fiendish "Greater Serbia" scheme (the Karlovac-Karlobag-Virovitica Serbian western border was his and Vojislav Seselj's slogan!), the author of "Siptari iza Prokletija" (Kosova Albanians over the Bjeshket e Nemuna mountains, i.e.: drive them out, to Albania!).

Kosovo: Council Reports Serb Violence in Feb

AU1303134996 Pristina KOSOVA DAILY REPORT in English 11 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Serbian regime violence against the Albanian population in Kosova has continued with impunity over the past month, said the Prishtina-based Council for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms (CDHRF) in a monthly report issued today (Monday) [11 March].

The CDHRF has registered 580 cases of human rights abuses (185 more than the previous month) committed in Kosova during February. Namely, 185 persons were arbitrarily arrested; 54 Albanians had their homes raided on by the Serbian police; 122 persons were physically ill-treated; 437 were subjected to intimidation and harassment, out of them 402 in connection with alleged arms possession; 191 persons were ordered to report at the Serbian police stations; 41 persons involved in political parties, human rights groups and Albanian-language-education were summoned to the so-called police "informative conversations"; four persons were convicted under criminal charges, commonly for political activism.

The report says that people of all strata and ages were targeted by the Serbian police, noting that 11 women and 28 children were subjected to various forms of ill-treatment. Hundreds of Kosova Albanian draft-age males have been delivered Serbian Army inductions, while Avdi Desku, from Siqeve village of Klina, accused for having deserted from the former Yugoslav Army (JNA) was sentenced to 10 months in prison at the Serbian military court in Nis (Serbia).

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